

A
SHORT VIEW
OF THE
PRINCIPAL DUTIES
OF THE
Christian Religion.

WITH
Plain Arguments to perswade to the sincere and speedy Practice of Them.

To which is added,
A Prayer suited to the Whole, to be used
Morning and Evening.

For the Grace of God that bringeth Salvation has appeared to all Men; teaching us, that denying Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, we should live soberly; righteously and godly in this present World; looking for that blessed Hope and the glorious Appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, Tit. 2. 11, 12, 13.

By a Divine of the Church of England,
for the Use of his Parishioners.

LONDON, Printed for J. Bnapton, at the
Crown in St. Paul's Church-Yard. 1700.

Price 3 d. or 20 s. per Hundred.

Jonathan Wrench

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To my beloved Pa-
rishioners of *Ailes-*
ham, in the County
of *Norfolk*.

Brethren,

AS my hearts Desire and Prayer to Rom. 10.1
God for you is, that ye may be sa-
ved: So it shall be my great Endeav-
our to guide and assist you, in this
important Business of *working out your* Phil. 2. 12
own Salvation. And in order thereto I
have in the following Pages given you
(as it were in one View) a Summary of
all those *Christian Duties* (with their
Motives to them) which I conceive ne-
cessary to *Eternal Life*, which (being
such) I intend (God willing) to make
the constant Subject of my publick Dis-
courses among you. And therefore I do
earnestly recommend them before-hand
to your serious and constant Perusal, that
so your Minds, by forming the same
Notions of the *Christian Doctrin* with
my self, may better apprehend my
Meaning in my Sermons, and conse-
quently be the better enabled, not only

to keep in memory what is preached unto you, but also to edifie or profit by it.

And the great concern I have for your Eternal Welfare, makes me the more desirous of your ready compliance with these my Endeavours, to build you up in your most holy Faith; the end whereof is nothing less than the Salvation of your Souls.

It is to be observed and remembered, that our composition is not made up of what is sensible only (though we chiefly converse with this) but that Man consists of a Soul, as well as a Body, and our experience may convince us, that the World is not a suitable, or satisfactory good for the one, though it be for the other; which plainly shews that our chief End is, not to eat, and drink, and sleep, and carry on a few wordly Designs; & then go out of the World as ignorant, & less innocent than we came into it; but our great End is, to cultivate our better Part, and by the constant exercise of Religion fit our Souls for that spiritual and immortal Life, the loss whereof, not even the whole World it self, can compensate; and yet nothing can put us into the Possession of it, but keeping the Commandments. For so it has pleased the Wisdom of God to make Religion, or Obedience to his Laws, at once the Condition of our future Happiness, and the

Eccles.
12. 13.

Mat. 16. 26.

— 19. 17.

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the necessary Preparation for it. For
tis our likeness to, or resemblance of
God, that must dispose us to relish any
Pleasure in the presence and enjoyment
of him, (for no one delighteth in the
conversation of him, who is of a temp-
er contrary to his own) and 'tis our Obe-
dience to his Will, that must make us
like him, (i. e.) *holy as he is holy*, and
consequently happy as he is happy.

1 Petr. 1. 5.
16.

So that the various Duties of the Christi-
an Religion, laid before you in the fol-
lowing Pages, are the very life of your
Souls; and your Right or Claim to the
one encreaseeth or diminisheth, in the
same Proportion, with your Practice of
the other. And therefore as ye Love
your Souls ye must love your Duty; Pro. 19. 16
for there is nothing else can afford you Psal. 119.
any solid Comfort in this World, or any 52. — 165.
reasonable hopes of Happiness in the 2 Cor. 1. 12.
other. Prov.
14. 32.

And it may be of great encourage-
ment to your Duty to consider, that as
it is thus exceeding necessary to be practi-
sed; So it is with all as easie to be
known. It is made so plain, that *he*
who runs may read it, and according-
ly it seems to have been more thoroughly
understood, (I am sure much better
practised) by poor *Sheperds*, and
ignorant *Fishermen*, than by the most
learned *Philosophers*, and *Disputers* of 1 Cor. 1. 21.
this

Acts 22. 3. *this World*; and St. Paul, though a
Scholar, was yet to preach the Gospel,
1 Cor. 1. 17. *not with Wisdom of Words*; and there-
fore there is not so much need of Logick
or the Art of reasoning, as of *true Faith*
and Piety to understand it. So that if
ye bring but along with you to these Pa-
pers an *honest and docible temper of Soul*,
James 1. 21. I could hope ye might (with as little
trouble as ye could desire) know enough
Tim. 3. 15 *to make you wise unto Salvation.*

And when once ye have attained to
such a degree of Knowledge in these
necessary Duties, then all that remains
to be further urged, is only that ye
would please to remember our Saviour's
Words to his Disciples; *If ye know these*
John 13. 17. *things, happy are ye if ye do them*, and that
ye may, as 'tis the earnest desire: So it
shall be the great Endeavour of,

Your most faithful Friend
and loving Pastor,

Jonathan Wrench.

A short View of the Principal Duties of the Christian Religion, &c.

GOD, Who would have all men to be saved, and come to the Knowledge of the Truth, has implanted in every Man a Desire of Happiness; and in the Gospel has made true Religion, that is to say, faithful Observance of the Laws of Christ, necessary for the Attainment of that Desire. So that it becomes at once every Man's Duty and Interest to acquaint himself with this true Religion, as being the one thing needful for the Object of his Thoughts, and the Subject of his Practice.

And as 'tis your Duty thus to learn: So (having the Care of your Souls upon me) I think it mine to inform you, what ye must do to inherit eternal Life, and that is, in short, what the Doctrine of the Gospel, or (as the Apostle expresseth it, what the Grace of God which brings Salvation, and has appeared to all Men) teacheth us, namely, that Denying Ungodliness, and worldly Lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present World.

This is the Sum of what we, on our Part, promised to God and Christ to perform, when we were baptized into the Christian Religion, for Baptism is that Ceremony, by which God enters into Covenant with the Persons to be baptized, wherein God is pleased to promise certain Advantages to them on his Part, and the Persons to be baptized engage to observe certain Conditions on theirs. The Terms of

A 4 Stipulation,

Stipulation, or the Covenant to be performed on Gods part, are (as our Church Catechism informs us)

Rom.

12. 5.

Eph. 1.

22, 23.

John

1. 12.

Rom.

8. 15.

Gal. 4.

5. 6.

Luke

21. 13.

First, That we shall be made Members of Christ, (that is to say) Members of his *spiritual Body, the Church*, whereof Christ himself is the Head, from whom, we are to expect all our Strength and Power to *live as becometh the Gospel of Christ*, or as Christians, that *walk worthy of the Lord unto all Well-pleasing*.

Secondly, That we shall be made the Children of God, that is, God (with whom we are in Covenant) will adopt us for his Sons through Faith in, and Obedience to, Christ our Saviour, and as his Sons will expect only a filial Obedience; will readily pass by our Infirmities, freely forgive our Sins, and be heartily reconciled to us, *in and through the Beloved*, will bestow upon us his *Holy Spirit*, and with Him, a Supply of all things necessary for the Support of our spiritual Life and Growth in Grace.

Rom. 8.

16, 17.

Tit. 3.

5. 7.

Heb.

1. 14.

Thirdly, as a Consequence of this, we shall be also made Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven; for if we are (as I said just now we were) hereby *made the Children of God*, the Apostle's Conclusion is very strong, *that if Children, then Heirs, Heirs of God, and joynt Heirs with Christ*, which can import nothing less than that we shall be, together with him, *Heirs of Salvation*,

All this is, in short, what God makes over to us in the Covenant of Baptism. All which we can expect, only upon Condition of the Performance of our Part of this sacred Covenant. For such is the Nature of Covenants, that when one of the Persons covenanting or contracting receedeth from his Part of the Covenant he does thereby actually acquit the other, with whom he covenanted, from all Obligation to perform his Part

part of the Covenant. So that if we do not perform our Part of this Covenant, made in our Baptism, we thereby discharge God from the Obligation of performing his Part, and therefore it stands us in great stead to be very punctual in our Observance of those Sacred Obligations, which we laid upon our Selves in our Baptism; because all the Priviledges belonging to us, as Christians, together with our Eternal Life and Happiness, either stand or fall by our well or non-Performance of them; for though *Jesus*, and he only, has delivered us from the Wrath to come, and reconciled us to God by his Death; yet it must be with all remember'd, that the Benefits of his Death and Passion are all conditional, and that he is become the Author of eternal Salvation, only to them that obey him. This being therefore a Matter of great Importance, I shall be the more particular (as far as my intended Brevity will admit) in my Consideration of those Conditions, which every Christian is supposed to promise, in his Baptism, faithfully to observe; and these are no more than what the Grace of God, (which has appeared to all men) teacheth us, viz. that denying Ungodliness, and worldly Lusts, we should live soberly, Righteously, and Godly, in this present World; for This is the Whole of Man, the Sum of all that God requires at our hands; in order to the working out our own Salvation, our Duty consists only in these two Things, the Eschewing Evil, and doing Good: The Evil to be eschewed, denyed, or forsaken by us is comprehended under these few Words; Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and the Good, in these, The Living Soberly, Righteously, and Godly, in this present World.

i. One Condition of the forementioned Priviledges is, that we Deny Ungodliness or Impiety. Now as * Piety is that Part of our Duty, which has a more immediate Relation to God: So * Impiety or Ungodliness may be supposed to

1. Theff.
1. 10.
2 Cor.
5. 18.
Acts
4. 12.
Heb.
5. 9.
Tit. 2.
11, 12.
Ecclef.
12. 13.
Phil.
2. 12.
Psal.
34. 14.
1 Pet. 3. 11.

A short View of the

comprehend in it all those Sins, which are levelled more immediately against Him, which may be all reduced to these two general Heads Either,

1. The Disowning Him the true God, for our God; or

2dly. The setting up other Gods besides him For,

Josh 24. 27. 1. The Disowning the true God for our
 Psal 53. 9. God implies in it the Disowning or Denying
 Acts 17. 29. Him in our Thoughts; either thinking Him
 Psal 73. not at all, or thinking unworthily of him; the
 9, 11. Denying Him in our Words, by arguing against
 Matt. 5. 34. his Being, and endeavouring to dispute Him
 James out of it: Swearing *falsely or vainly* by his
 5. 12. Name, Cursing, Blaspheming Him, and Ridic-
 Job 31. culing his sacred Word. Lastly, the Denying
 26, 27, 28. him in our Actions, *Living as without God in the*
 Lev. 24. *World*, either by Omitting our known Duties
 15, 16. to him, or Committing wilful Sins against
 1 Tim. him. All which are notorious Instances of
 6. 1. Ungodliness.

2 Tim. 2dly. Ungodliness consisteth, not only in
 3. 8. disowning the true God any of the forementi-
 Tit. 1. 16. on'd Ways, but also in Setting up other Gods
 besides Him. Which I conceive, may be done
 either of these three Ways:

Lev. 26. 1. 1. By Substituting, or Placing any other God in
 Rom. 1. 23. Room of the true God; or

Acts 17. 29. 2dly. By worshiping any other God toge-
 2 Kings ther with Him; or

17. 33. 3dly. By giving those Acts of Worship to
 Zeph. 1. 5. any created Good, which are due to God alone.

The two former of these relate to the Idolatrous Worship of the Heathens, which was one great Sin, that Christians formerly promised in their Baptism to forsake, when they engaged to Renounce the Devil, and all his Works; and the latter is what Christians, not only were, but are now a-days obliged to Renounce, and yet but too frequently adhere to it;

in that they are apt to Repose (as sad Experience shews) a greater Reliance on their worldly Goods, fixing more Hope in them, and Rom 25. 1. fording a larger Share of Love to them, than to God himself; so making them their God, and their Happiness. And accordingly we are told in Scripture of some, *Whose God is their belly*; of others, *Who sacrifice to their Net*, and Phil. 3. 19. *men Incense to their Drag*; of some, *Who trust in Harlots*, and some in *Horses*; of others, *Who make Gold their Hope*, and say to the *fine Gold*, *Thou art our Confidence*; whose Sin is therefore justly called ** Idolatry*; because they affix those Acts of the Soul to a created Good, which ought to be employed upon God alone. So that all these wicked Practices, being in effect Idolatrous, may be justly stiled ungodly Actions; and are therefore included in this great Sin of Ungodliness, which we must deny.

adly. Another Condition of the fore-mentioned Priviledges is, our forsaking worldly Lusts. By worldly Lusts I understand all the disorderly Motions, whether of our Understandings, Wills, Affections, or Appetites, as they are all depraved or corrupted by the Abuse of our selves.

1. As to the Disorders of our Understandings when these, in Persuance of their natural Inclination to Knowledge, either thirst after that which is neither proper, nor safe to be known, Deut. 29. 29. *as the secret Things of God, and the pleasures of Sin*; or after that which is both safe and proper to be known, in an undue manner, as when we immoderately study humane Learning to the utter Neglect of divine Knowledge, and Rom. 1. 21. *the Care of our Souls*, our Understandings are in both these cases productive of sinful Lusts.

adly. There is a Corruption residing also in our Wills, which diverts them from their Embraces of chiefest good, as *the Spiritual things of God*, Rom. 8. 7. to their over-earnest Pursuit of sensual Pleasures, by

by which they being enslaved and brought into
 Rom. 7. 23. *Captivity to the Law of Sin*, are likewise productive of many sinful Lusts. But,

3dly. And above all, our Affections have
 Col. 1. 21. suffered very much by the Abuse of our selves; are very extravagant in their Motions, and withal but too easie to be misled; thus nothing is more common, than to see the two

great governing Passions in us, I mean our Love and Hatred, misplaced, by loving what we ought to hate, such are sinful Pleasures; and

Psal. 97. 10. hating that, which we ought to love, such are God and Goodness; or if we love and

Matth.

22. 37.

hate what we ought; yet it is often done in a disproportionate manner, either by pursuing the best things with an indifferent Affection; and indifferent things, such as wordly Goods, with our best Affection; or avoiding the least Evils, such as temporal Calamities, with our greatest Hatred; and the greatest Evils, viz. Sin, and eternal Death, with a less Hate, or Aversion; in any of these Miscarriages, which (God knows) are but too frequent, we blindly run into sinful Lusts.

4thly. And Lastly, The disorderly Appetites of the Body, together with that of carnal Concupiscence, may in a more peculiar manner, be called fleshly Lusts; thus when we eat and drink more than is consistent with our Health, and the sprightly Operations of the Soul, or when our carnal Concupiscence is directed to a wrong Object, or immoderately used on a lawful one, they are in the very matter of them sinful Lusts.

Rom. 13.

13. 14.

Jer. 3. 8.

And thus having enquired into the Corruptions of our Nature, 'tis not difficult to forebode what (without the Application of Religion) must be the unhappy Effects of them. It were easie to shew how every one of those fleshly Lusts in particular, reckoned up by the Apostle, flow from one or other of our disordered and corrupted

corrupted Faculties. But this were a task, as
 not very agreeable to my intended Brevity; so
 (I could hope) not very necessary, in as much
 as the Lusts of the Flesh are manifest, which are Gal. 5. 19.
 these, Adultery, Fornication, Uncleaness, Lascivious- 20. 21.
 ness, Idolatry, Witchcraft, Hatred, Variance, Emu-
 lations, Wrath, Strife, Seditions, Heresies, Envyings,
 Murders, Drunkenness, Revellings, and such like.
 These and such like, are the Lusts, which
 we must deny; that is, which we must avoid;
 and that not only in their grosser Acts, but we
 must resist and stifle (as much as possible) the
 very first Motions in us; and in order thereto,
 we must form before-hand firm and well-
 grounded Resolutions never to yield them our
 Assent, and lest our Resolutions, when tryed
 should not be found faithful, we should prudent-
 ly cut off all Occasion of Dispute, and indu-
 striously shun even the very Shadow of a Tempt-
 ation. All this Care and Caution is implied 1 Thess.
 in this one word Deny. And thus we see what it 5. 22.
 is to deny Ungodliness and wordly Lusts, and
 that in effect it is the same as to Renounce the
 Devil and all his Works, the Poms and Vanities of
 this wicked World, and all the sinful Lusts of the
 Flesh, as our Church Catechism expresseth it;
 and this is one great Part of our Baptismal Vow.
 That which is further required of us to procure
 us a Right to the fore-mentioned Priviledges
 is, That we Live Soberly Righteously and Godly in
 this present World; soberly in Relation to our
 selves, Righteously in reference to our Neigh-
 bour, and Godly in respect to God, which
 latter, being the Foundation of the other
 two, I shall beg leave to invert their Order,
 and begin with that first, which is here
 set last, and that is, the Living Godly.
 Godliness (or as it here signifies) * Piety, * Evol. Gen.
 hath (as I before hinted) a special Regard to
 those Commands of God, which have a more
 immediate aspect upon God himself, and so
 chiefly

- chiefly imports *our duty towards God*, the whole whereof is sum'd up by the Author to the Hebrews in few words, namely, *the believing that he is, and that he is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him.* As to his Existence, this I might evince from, not only his Works of Creation and Providence, but from the Nature and Dictates of every Mans Conscience, suggesting to him, that God is not far from every one of us. Which gives me reasonable grounds of hope, that my time and pains would be better spent in explaining his Essence, than improving his Existence, that is, in shewing you what he is, rather than that he is. Now God (as far as an infinite Being can be conceived or described by a finite Understanding) is a Spirit, the Creator of all things, Invisible, whom no Man hath seen or can see. Omniscient, or knowing all things. Most Holy, True, Eternal, 1 Tim. 1. Unchangeable, Omnipotent. Perfectly Good, both in himself, and to us. Omnipresent, or every where present. Most Just, Merciful and Loving; who, though one in Essence, exists in three Persons, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, from which (though imperfect) Account of the Divine Being, it is easie to deduce or draw our various Obligations to him, as thus. Since from this Description of God 'tis plain that we owe our selves unto him, we owe withal, all possible Service to him, which (to procure his divine Acceptance) must be suited to his Nature, and that being Spiritual, it follows that we must worship him in Spirit, or with a spiritual Worship, that is, we must make all possible and just acknowledgments of the divine Perfections, chiefly by the Powers of our Souls, yet not excluding those of our Bodies, with which we must glorify him, as well as with our Spirits, and that, by such humble gestures of Body, as testify and extoll the adorable Perfections of God to others; we must entertain right apprehensions of the divine Nature and Excellencies.
- Heb. 11. 6.
- Acts 17. 27.
- John 4. 24.
- Acts 17. 24.
- 1 Tim. 1.
17. 6. 16.
- Joh. 2. 1. 17.
- 1 Sam. 2. 2.
- John 3. 33.
- Psal. 90. 2.
- Jam. 1. 17.
- Gen. 17. 1.
- Psal. 119.
- 68.
- Psal. 139.
7. 145. 17.
- Deut. 7. 9.
- Exod. 34. 6.
- 1 Tim. 2. 5.
- 1 John 5. 7.
- John 4.
- 23, 24.
- Eph. 3. 14.
- 1 Col. 6. 20.
- Acts 20. 36.
- Rev. 4.
- 10, 11.

whole in our Minds, frequently call them to
 the He- mind, firmly believe them, really delight in Psal. 73.
 ng that them, and (as far as 'tis possible) imitate those 25, 28.
 at dili- which are imitable by us. We must further,
 this I- out of our great Esteem for, and deep sense
 orks of of these his Excellencies, admire and adore him, — 18. 3.
 Nature bow down our Souls before him in Prayer and 96. 4.
 , sug- praises to him, as to our great Creator and Heb 13. 15
 in every benefactor, in whom we continually live, move, and Acts 17. 28.
 rounds we our Beings. All this is no more than a just
 uld be acknowledgment of what God is in himself,
 han in- and here described to us; for thus our Faith
 you and Hope, that is to say, our Assent to the John 6. 40.
 Now truths, which he hath revealed, and our ex-
 concei- pectation of what he has promised, are debts Rom.
 (g) is we owe to his Veracity or Truth, as founded 10. 11.
 sible, on his Omniscience, Holiness, and his Omni-
 scient, potence. Our love of, and trust in him, are 1 Cor. 8. 3.
 ternal, the necessary effects of our firm Belief of his 1 Tim.
 both in Almighty Power, joyned with his infinite 4. 10.
 where Goodness, which renders him both able and Isa. 26. 4.
 who, willing to do us good. Our fear of him or
 rsons, care not to offend him is but the natural con- Luk. 12. 5.
 nough, sequence of our Belief of his Omnipresence,
 it is and Justice armed with his Omnipotence. Our
 ligati- patience and submission to his Will are but Heb. 12. 9.
 tion in us, the reasonable products of his infinite
 unto Wisdom and Greatness, exerted in his act of
 service Creation. Our Honour or our profound Reve- 1 Sam. 2. 30
 Ac- rence and Respect to his super-excellent Majesty,
 and and to all things relating to him, as his Name,
 must his Word, his Sacraments, his Ministers, his
 Wor- House, and his Day, our profound Regard to
 d just these naturally flow from our consideration of
 ions, all his boundless Perfections.

not Lastly, his Existing in three Persons, Father, 1 John
 a we Son, and Holy Ghost, binds upon us fresh Obl- 5. 7.
 and gations of Obedience to them all, & particular-
 y, as ly of owning and renewing our Obligations
 s of and Resolutions of Obedience to them.
 pre- in the blessed Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.
 llen- Because
 cies.

Because herein we make a particular acknowledgment of what each of these blessed Persons have done for us; as that God the Father, who once gave his Son to die for the Sins of the whole World, is disposed to present him here for our spiritual Food and Sustenance. The Son, as he once freely offered up himself for us upon the Cross; So again freely offers to us his Body and Blood in this heavenly Feast. And Lastly, the Holy Ghost, conveys that strength and refreshment to our Souls, which is here received from the Body and Blood of Christ. All which enhanseth our Obligations to renew our Obedience to them all, and in order thereto to come often to this Blessed Sacrament, for the worthy receiving whereof, the best Preparation is to live Soberly, Righteously and Godly, in this present World. And what it is to live Righteously is the second thing to be consider'd by me.

Now Righteousness is, in short nothing else but the giving to every man his due, in all those various capacities and relations wherein he stands. Thus there being the relation of Magistrate and Subject, of Pastor and Flock, of Father and Son, of Husband and Wife, Master and Servant, Brethren and Friends, there being also a common Relation to all Mankind as our Neighbour, Righteousness consists in an exact observance, as well of those special Duties, which each of these relations may bring us under in particular, as of all other Duties, which the common relation of Neighbour, lays upon us in general; that is, in the giving to every Man his due, not only as he is my Neighbour, but moreover and above, as he may be concerned with me in any one or more of the forementioned Relations. Thus (besides the common Obligation of Neighbour) our Superiors the Magistrates, being Gods Vicegerents, and of his Appointment and acting by his Authority justly claim of us an

Rom. 5. 8.

1 John 2. 2.

Heb. 9. 14

— 12. 2.

Matth. 26.

27, 28.

Acts 2. 46.

1 Cor.

11. 26.

Rom. 13.

1, 4.

Ecclef.

10. 20.

Pro. 20. 20.

aw-

Acknowledging our full Apprehension of them in our Thoughts,
 and making an honourable mention of them
 with our Lips, submitting to them for Conscience
 sake, paying them their Tribute, and praying for Acts 23. 5.
 their happy Government of us, & that, which in Jud. 8.
 we owe unto their Subjects, is their Pro- 1 Pet. 2. 13.
 tection against the Assaults of their Enemies, a Rom. 13.
 constant maintenance of their Rights & Proper- 5. 7.
 ties, their Liberty and Religion, that under 1 Tim. 2. 2.
 we may lead quiet and peaceable Lives in all
 Innocence and Honesty. And as to our spiritual 1 Thess.
 Parents who have begotten us through the Gospel, 5. 13.
 we also we must esteem very highly in love for 1 Tim.
 their Works Sake, and if they rule well count them 5. 17.
 worthy of double Honour; which we cannot bet- Heb. 13. 17.
 ter express, than by attending to their Word and
 Doctrine with the utmost Application of our John
 Minds, and by falling to the practice of it 20. 23.
 with all our Hearts; which would not only 1 Cor.
 prevent the ungrateful use of the Censures of the 16. 16.
 Church, (which we must submit unto when we Gal. 6. 6.
 offend) but would better dispose us to afford
 our Pastors an honourable maintenance, as it is our 1 Cor. 9. 14
 duty to do, it being (as St. Paul says) a matter
 of God's own Ordaining and Appointment that
 they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel Heb. 10. 25
 Lastly, we must joyn with them in their of- Luk. 2. 37.
 fering up the publick Prayers of the Church, and Acts 2. 46.
 also present our private Prayers to God for them, 1 Thess.
 for good Success on their Labours, that whilst they 5. 17.
 labour for others, they themselves may not be cast away; but
 rather may both save themselves, & them that hear them.
 Again, Our natural Parents, being (under-
 stood) the Authors and Maintainers of our Be-
 ing, acquire hereby a right to our Honour
 & Esteem, our Fear and Reverence, our Mat. 19. 19
 Love and Affection, our Obedience to their Col. 3. 20.
 lawful Commands, our submission to their
 chastisements, and lastly our Gratitude in Ad- Heb. 12. 9.
 dressing to their Wants, and bearing with 1 Tim.
 their Infirmities. And they, as being our Pa- 5. 4.
 rents

Because herein we make a particular acknowledgment of what each of these blessed Persons have done for us; as that God the Father, who once gave his Son to die for the Sins of the whole World, is disposed to present him here for our spiritual Food and Sustenance. The Son, as he once freely offered up himself for us upon the Cross; So again freely offers to us his Body and Blood in this heavenly Feast. And Lastly, the Holy Ghost, conveys that strength and refreshment to our Souls, which is here received from the Body and Blood of Christ. All which enhanseth our Obligations to renew our Obedience to them all, and in order thereto to come often to this Blessed Sacrament, for the worthy receiving whereof, the best Preparation is to live Soberly, Righteously and Godly, in this present World. And what it is to live Righteously is the second thing to be consider'd by me.

Now Righteousness is, in short nothing else but the giving to every man his due, in all those various capacities and relations wherein he stands. Thus there being the relation of Magistrate and Subject, of Pastor and Flock, of Father and Son, of Husband and Wife, Master and Servant, Brethren and Friends, there being also a common Relation to all Mankind as our Neighbour, Righteousness consists in an exact observance, as well of those special Duties, which each of these relations may bring us under in particular, as of all other Duties, which the common relation of Neighbour, lays upon us in general; that is, in the giving to every Man his due, not only as he is my Neighbour, but moreover and above, as he may be concerned with me in any one or more of the forementioned Relations. Thus (besides the common Obligation of Neighbour) our Superiors the Magistrates, being Gods Vicegerents, and of his Appointment and acting by his Authority justly claim of us an

Rom. 5. 8.
1 John 2. 2.
Heb. 9. 14
— 12. 2.
Matth. 26. 27, 28.
Acts 2. 46.
1 Cor. 11. 26.
Rom. 13.
I, 4.
Eccles. 10. 20.
Pro. 20. 20.

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ful Apprehension of them in our Thoughts,
 e making an honourable mention of them
 ith our Lips, submitting to them for *Conscience*
 e, paying them their *Tribute*, and praying for Acts 23. 5.
 eir happy Government of us, & that, which in Jud. 8.
 urn they owe unto their Subjects, is their Pro- 1 Pet. 2. 13.
 ction against the Assaults of their Enemies, a Rom. 13.
 nstant maintenance of their Rights & Proper- 5. 7.
 s, their Liberty and Religion, *that under* 1 Tim. 2. 2.
we may lead quiet and peaceable Lives in all
allness and Honesty. And as to our spiritual 1 Thess.
 rements who have *begotten us through the Gospel,* 5. 13.
 e also we must *esteem very highly in love for* 1 Tim.
 ir Works Sake, and if they rule well count them 5. 17.
 rthy of double Honour; which we cannot bet- Heb. 13. 17
 xpress, than by attending to their Word and
 strine with the utmost Application of our
 inds, and by falling to the practice of it
 ith all our Hearts; which would not only
 revent the ungrateful use of the Censures of the
 urch, (which we must submit unto when we
 fend) but would better dispose us to afford
 Pastors an honourable maintenance, *as it is our*
 ies to do, it being (as St. Paul says) a matter 1 Cor. 9. 14
 God's own Ordaining and Appointment *that*
which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel
 Lastly, we must joyn with them in their of- Heb. 10. 25
 ing up the publick Prayers of the Church, and Luk. 2. 37.
 ly present our private Prayers to God for them, Acts 2. 46.
 or good Success on their Labours, *that whilst they* 1 Thess.
such to others, they themselves may not be cast away; but 5. 17.
ther may both save themselves, & them that hear them.
 Again, Our natural Parents, being (under
 ed) the Authors and Maintainers of our Be-
 gs, acquire hereby a right to our Honour
 Esteem, our Fear and Reverence, our Mat. 15. 19
 ve and Affection, our Obedience to their Col. 3. 20.
 yful Commands, our submission to their Heb. 12. 9.
 astisements, and lastly our Gratitude in Ad- 1 Tim.
 mistring to their Wants, and bearing with 5. 4.
 ir Infirmities. And they, as being our Pa-
 rents

- rents, are by the Laws both of Nature and Religion, obliged to provide their Children (as far as they are able) with a competent maintenance, in respect both of their Souls and Bodies. In respect to their Souls, that they be brought to an early Baptism, that they be taught to read, and as soon as possible, be instructed in the Principles of the Christian Religion, and that a constant care be had, (*by forbearing Provocations, and shewing Piety at Home* and by all other good and prudent means) that they dayly encrease in the Knowledge and Practice of them. In respect to their Bodies, that their Parents supply them with Food and Raiment, and (if possible) with all the Conveniencies, as well as Necessaries, of Life; that they may be put into the World under a possibility, and probability of thriving in it.
- There are also mutual dues between Husband and Wife, and the Duties common to them both are, that they love each other, and express it in endeavouring to procure a mutual satisfaction in all things, and to promote the Temporal and Spiritual Welfare of each other; that they be faithful to each other in Bed, having always in remembrance the 7th Commandment; that they bear with each others Infirmities, and partake of each others Prosperity or Adversity; that they pray for each other, that they honour, that is, giveth respect due to each others Person, and particularly that the Husband give Honour to the Wife in St. Peters sense, which is * Maintenance, *being the weaker Vessel*; that he exercise his Authority over Her in the milder way of Admonition, rather than in the more imperious way of Command, remembring that *they twain are but one flesh*, though the Man be the head of the Woman; that he gives her all due Benevolence, and lastly all seasonable and necessary Instructions. The Duties of the Wife, whereby she stands
- Eph. 6. 4.
- 2 Cor. 12. 14.
- Eph. 5. 31
- 5.
- 1 Cor. 2. 7
- 1 Pet. 3. 2.
- Heb. 13. 4.
- 1 Pet. 3. 7.
- * *την*
- 1 Pet. 3. 7
- 1 Cor. 11. 3.
- 7. 3

re and especially obliged unto her Husband, are 1 Pet. 3. 1.
 children she submits peaceably to that Authority Eph. 5. 24.
 competent her, which God has given to the Man;
 als and as a necessary consequence of this, *She re-*
 they be use her Husband, and shew it in a becoming — 33.
 they be quage, and Deportment towards him; 1 Pet. 3. 4.
 ble, belly, that she be at all times forward to do
 an Re (she knows) he likes, and obey what he Eph. 5. 24.
 s (b) amands, provided it be both lawful and
 ut Home edient, of which, he is supposed to be the most
 us) that competent Judge, being by the Apostle appoint- Col. 3. 18.
 ge and in Instructor to his Wife, even in Matters 1 Cor.
 Bodies Religion. 14. 35.

od and lastly, there are various Duties incumbent
 e Con Masters, and Servants, that Masters take a due
 e; that of their Servants as Members of their
 under Families; that they provide for their 1 Tim. 5. 8.
 y in it lies a competent Maintenance, and for their
 n Hus als, religious Instruction and Admonition;
 on to at in every respect they give to their Servants, Col. 4. 1.
 er, and which is just and equal, as knowing
 mutual they also have a Master in Heaven with whom is
 te the respect of Persons. That they be not in their Rom. 2. 11.
 each government of them harsh and froward, but
 other old and gentle; that they require nothing of
 e 7th em, but that which is, in it self, both rea-
 each sonable and lawful; that they threaten them Eph. 6. 9.
 other more than is necessary, and give them on-
 ay for (when need so requires) due Correction;
 veth at they perfectly instruct them in the Art or
 rticu trade, which they undertook to teach them;
 Wife at they reward them according to agreement, Deut. 24.
 ce, actually paying them their Wages; lastly, 14, 15.
 is Au at they restrain them from Vicious, and Jam. 5. 4.
 dmo ove them (all they can) to Religious Practi-
 s way s: And Servants in return of these Dues,
 re bu must (as they justly ought) count such Masters 1 Tim. 6. 1.
 Wa mthy of all Honour, and shew it upon all Occa-
 an s in their respectfull Carriage and Demea-
 ions our towards them. They must obey them in all
 stand ings, agreeable to their Contract, & that out of a
 more Princi-

- Col. 3. 22. Principle of Conscience, not with Eye-service as Men
 Eph. 6. 5. pleasers, but as the Servants of Christ, with singl
 6, 7, 8. ness of heart and chearfulness of Spirit; which
 Tit. 2. will make them diligent & constant in their Obe
 2, 10. dience; they must be also true to their Tru
 ever promoting, by all lawful means, the
 Masters Profit; they must take care of the
 Goods, vindicate their Credit abroad (as far
 they can) and conceal their Infirmities at home
 And lastly, they must quietly submit to the
 unjust as well as due Corrections, ever amend
 ing by them; for what glory is it, if when
 are buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patient
 1Pet. 2. 20. ly? but if when ye do well, and suffer for it,
 take it patiently, this is acceptable unto God. *Ac
 V. 18. cordingly Servants are there commanded to be
 subject to their Masters, with all fear, not only to the
 good and gentle, but also to the froward. For
 though Masters should not strictly observe their
 Duties to their Servants, yet this would not
 free Servants from their Obligations to their
 Masters; because God has in Duty bound not
 only the Master and Servant to one another
 but both of them to himself. And this, (as
 would have it observed and remembred) hold
 true in all the other forementioned Relations
 of Superiors and Inferiors; so that the Super
 rior's offence against God, in depriving the In
 ferior of his due, (and so on the contrary) can
 not authorize the Inferior to sin against God
 too, by returning the injury received upon his
 superior; as for instance, though a wicked Father
 should cast off all care of his helpless
 Children, and so sin against God, as well as
 injure his Children, (who have a natural right
 to maintenance) yet this would not excuse
 his Children from their Obedience to their
 wicked Father; because it is impossible that
 ever one Man's Sin should excuse that of ano
 1Sam. 2. 25 ther, when both sin against God. And this is
 all I think necessary to be said concerning the
 Relations of Superiors and Inferiors

There

There are other Relations, which seem to be
 upon the level, those, I mean of Bre-
 thren; and as to these, there are some parti-
 culars belonging to them, whether they be
 natural or our spiritual Brethren. Thus our
 natural Brethren are, by means of their near-
 ness to us by nature, obliged to be more
 serviceable to us (when they can) than they
 are bound to be to mere Strangers; because
 our natural Affection for us may be well sup-
 posed to prompt them to it, by exciting in
 them a passionate concern for our Welfare;
 which supersedes the want of all those Argu-
 ments and Entreaties, which are allowable,
 sometimes necessary to be used, in draw-
 ing out our relief to Strangers. So that to
 our Brother of our Substance, and to
 him in every thing where we can, and
 where he needeth, seemeth to be but the ne-
 cessary, though just, effect of our near Alli-
 ance to him by Nature. And no less necessary
 to their natural is a mutual accord and agreement Gen. 13. 8
 amongst Brethren, and that upon account of
 their partaking of the same Blood and Sub-
 stance, deriving both from the same Root,
 as a Consequence of this, from their like-
 ness of temper (for the most part) from
 their equality in circumstances, and from the
 clearments of innocent and undesigned Con-
 versation; all which disposeth them to delight
 in anothers Converse, freely to communi-
 cate their Thoughts, and so participate of one
 anothers Souls as much as they do, of
 one anothers Bodies; so that Nature it self teacheth us,
 as Brethren owe to one another love, and as
 the effect of that, union in Heart and Soul;
 as the effect of both these, a readiness to
 supply their Wants, either by lending them
 bodily Assistance, or *Ministring to them of*
Substance, which is by the Apostle called 1 Tim.
providing for those of our own House or Family. 5. 8.
 But

- But besides our Brethren by Nature, there are also such by Grace, commonly called *Spiritual Brethren*, who become such, by being made *Baptism Members* of the same *Catholick Church* with our selves; we being all united under one head *Christ Jesus*. And in this Relation there are various Duties we stand obliged to observe towards one another. For, considering that we are *Members of the same Body*, we must necessarily think our selves bound to contribute, all we can, both, to the Service of the *Members particular*, and of the whole *Body in general* for as 'tis in the *natural Body*, so is it in the *spiritual One*, every *Member* is useful to, and receives benefit from another. *The Eye cannot say to the Hand, I have no need of thee; nor again; the Hand to the Feet, I have no need of you;* so that it comes our indispensable Duty, as *Members of the Catholick Church*, to render our selves as useful, as we can, to all our fellow *Members* having the same care one for another; which we should exercise in mutual *Offices of kindness* to one another, as occasion serves, being obliged to do good unto all *Men*, but (as the *Apostle* observes) more especially unto them that are of the *Household of Faith*; to relieve at once the wants of their *Bodies* and promote the good of their *Souls*; to admonish them of their *Faults*, bringing them to a *Sorrow* for them, and an amendment of them; to bear with the *infirmities* of weak Brethren; to convince those that separate from the *Church*, of the *Sin and Mischief* of *Schism*; to persuade them to an immediate return into the *Bosom* of the *Church*, and constant adherence to her. To communicate with them in all the common *Offices of Christianity*, in adhering to the same *Faith and Doctrine*, that *Faith* I mean, which was once delivered to the *Saints*, in joyning in the same *Worship*, receiving the same *Sacrament* of the *Lords Supper*, in offering up the same
- Rom. 12. 5.
1 Cor. 12.
12, 13.
1 Cor.
12. 21.
Gal. 6. 10.
Mat. 18. 15.
Rom.
15. 14.
Gal. 6.
Rom 15. 1.
1 Cor. 1. 10.
— 12. 25.
Jude 3.

there byers, the same in substance though not in
 Spirio forms of expression, being presented to
 made same God, for the same common Mercies,
 lick Chon the same terms, through the same Media- 1 Tim.2 5.
 ed unon, and with the same common Affection,
 tion thd Brotherly concern for one another: And as
 o obse are thus to communicate with our fellow
 g that mbers in matters of religious Worship: So
 ust neast we also participate of their Joys and
 all rows, whether in temporal or spiritual
 Members ncerns; for as the Members of the Body na-
 generat communicate their Sorrows and their Joys
 the spirio all the rest; So the Members of the spiritual
 d receiody must sympathize with one another, and
 not sayether one Member suffer, all the Members should 1 Cor.12,26
 e; the Hsfer with it, Or whether one Member be honoured, Rom.
 at it the Members should rejoyce with it. 12. 24.
 Members Lastly, as we are thus to partake of the Joys
 es as uod Sorrows of the Members in particular: So
 Membro of those of the Church in general, whe-
 which her national or universal. In times of Perfe-
 kindn tion we must condole the Desolations. Then
 ing obl r Miseries and Calamities should, more ef-
 Apoc cially, excite both our pity to see her in the
 t are of st, and our Repentance of our crying Sins, Psal.
 he wa which justly draw down direful Judgments 102. 14.
 l of th n her. Earnestly beseeching God that he would Hosea.
 s, bri good in his good pleasure unto Sion, that he 5. 15.
 n amewould build up the Walls of Jerusalem. And in Psal.51.18
 ies of r flourishing Condition, we must rejoyce
 separ with Her, expressing our Joy and Gratitude in a
 Miscithful Obedience to, as well as in a constant
 nmediomunion with Her, that God may be there-
 n, andy disposed to hear our Prayers, which we
 municould ever offer up on Her behalf, saying, O Psal.74.19
 f Chriliver not the Soul of thy Turtle Dove unto the
 aith a multitude of the wicked, forget not the Congregation
 which thy poor for ever, but strengthen thy Spouse.
 g in t Lastly, There is one Relation more, which I
 acramehall mention to you, and that is, a very Inti-
 the samemate one, I mean that of a Friend, who is as Deut.13.6.
 Pra

- ones own Soul; and though this Relation Christianity calls by the name of Charity, (which, as such, is to be extended to all Mankind) yet because our Capacities are finite, and we cannot exercise those Offices of Friendship to all the World, which we can to some few particular Persons; therefore this Friendship or particular Charity, must be confined to those few, whom either the convenience of Neighbourhood, the Probability of their Usefulness, our natural Relation to them, our delight in them, our special Affection for them, and above all their known Worth and Goodness shall invite us, to admit into our Friendship; and when upon any, or all of the fore-going Considerations, we have made some few Persons our Friends, then Christianity, as well as the nature of Friendship requires, that we love our Friend with the greatest Affection; that we serve him to the utmost of our Power; that we freely communicate our Thoughts to him, when there be occasion; that we advise him in his Doubts and Scruples; that we *admonish him of his Faults*, restrain him from Evil; faithfully keep his Secrets; that we comfort him in Afflictions, rejoyce with him in Prosperity, doubling his Joys and dividing his Griefs; that we heartily wish and pray for his Welfare; and lastly, that we be constant to his Friendship, and all these Offices of it. All this is (as I before hinted) Charity extended to a Few. But Christian Charity is in its own nature much more comprehensive, and takes in all Mankind; for so the Gospel enjoyns us, to *love our Neighbour as our selves*. And in the Scripture sense, whosoever is another; is our Neighbour; so that, according to the Christian Law, we must do all the good we can to all men, not only Friends, but Enemies, whose injuries must never be otherwise return'd than with Prayers and Kindness, but must
- 1 Sam.
20. 17.
Prov. 27. 9.
Ecclus.
22. 22.
Prov.
27. 10.
Matt.
22. 39.
Matt. 5. 24.
Rom. 12.
20, 21.

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Christ must forgive them as heartily as we desire to be forgiven, and deal by them (as well as by all other Men) as kindly, and as justly as we desire to be dealt by, for this is the great Rule of the Gospel, and of Universal, as well as of eternal Obligation, *All things whatsoever ye would that Men should do to you, do ye even so to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.* So that if we would not be abused, & injured in our Persons, robbed or plunder'd in our Estates, over-reached in our Bargains, slandered or defamed in our good Name, or the like : So neither must we offer any of these or the like Abuses to any Man, whether Friend or Foe, but as in reason we desire to avoid Injuries, to have our Rights defended, and nothing of them lost ; so must we, in our Observance of this equitable Rule, not only not injure, but maintain and defend our Neighbour in all his Rights, as far as we can, otherwise we are not just unto him. For if the Nature of Justice be the giving to every Man his due, then the Practice of it must certainly consist in never taking away, but preserving (what we can) the Life of our Neighbour, in defending his Body from Injuries, and his Soul from Sin, in granting him the Liberty of reasoning and judging for himself, in not slandering him, or lessening his good Name, but as far as we can in clearing it when it is aspersed, in imparting our true meaning to him by our Words, in performing punctually what we promised to him, in fairly using him in our Dealings, in never coveting his Goods, but rather desiring to promote his Profit. In these and such like things consists our justice to him ; because he being a rational Creature united to us in Society, holds his Life, his Body and Soul, with all the Benefits of Society, such as Truth, Love, Peace, Credit, Protection, and the Profits of Trade, by the same Law of Nature with our selves, and

Mat. 7. 12.

James 4. 11

Eph. 4. 2

Psal 15. 2, 3

4.

Jer. 33. 15,

16.

Lev. 19. 13.

Mark

10. 19.

1 Thess. 4. 6

so can make as good a Title to them, as we can to what we have; so that according to the stated Notion of Justice, and this unalterable Law of Equity, the *doing as we would be done by*, we can no more injure our Neighbour than our selves, but are strictly bound to defend his forementioned Rights, and consequently to free him (when we can) from those Miseries and Misfortunes, which either do, or would invade them.

And though this is often called by another name, I mean, that of Charity, yet it still retains the Nature of Justice; it being no more than the miserable Man's due (as by consequence it appears) to receive relief from his Fellow Creatures, when it can be had. And to this Notion the Psalmist seems to incline, when he Psal. 37. 21. gives the Charitable Man (as he does very oft 25. 29. &c. in the Psalms) the Name and Title of *Righteous*.

So that Justice to our Neighbour obligeth us to relieve the various Necessities of the miserable, whether they relate to the Soul or Body. In regard to the Soul, sorrow of Mind justly demands our Administration of Comfort; Ignorance and Error calls for our Information and Forbearance; Perverseness and Obstinacy of will for our wholesome Advice and seasonable Reproof, Weakness of Judgment for our Direction, Pity and Compassion. And as to the Body, its natural Blemishes and Defects ought in justice to sollicite more our Pity than our Scorn or Laughter; its Weakness & Infirmities should stir us up to contribute all we can to its support and recovery, and as for its outward wants, Food and Raiment, these call loudly for our Supply, as being necessary to the Preservation of the Individual. Now in supplying our Neighbour (that is, every Man that wanteth) with all these things, as far as our Abilities will serve, or his Necessities require, is that Duty of Charity, which Justice

1 Theff.

5. 14.

James 5.

19. 20.

Rom. 14. 19

2 Tim. 2.

24. 25.

Rom. 15.

1. 2.

Acts 20. 35

Psal. 41. 1.

Luk. 10. 33,

34. 35. 37.

James 2.

15. 16.

1 John 3.

17. 18.

Justice obligeth us to exercise towards him.

And thus in a faithful discharge of all the forementioned dues to our Neighbour, in all his Capacities and Relations, consisteth this great Duty of Righteousness, or living Righteously.

The last Duty to be considered is, that which respecteth our selves, (and that is) the living Soberly. By * *Sobriety*, I understand a Subjection * *Super-* of all the Faculties of the Soul, and the *stwin* Powers of the Body, to the Rules of right Reason, and the Laws of God; that is, that we employ our Understandings in searching out the noblest Truths and our chief End, which are God and Happiness; that we bend and dispose our Wills to prosecute our chief End by the fittest Means, that is, by the Practice of Religion; that we proportion our Affections to the Value of things; that is, that we set our best Affections on the best things; *that we love the Lord our God with all our Heart, with all our Soul, and with all our Mind, and bestow no greater Affection on the things of this World, than their intrinsic Worth requires; that we hate and avoid the greatest Evils, Sin and Death, with our utmost Hatred; that we be less fearful of less Misfortunes, and patiently suffer those that are unavoidable; that we envy not the Fortunate, or covet any thing that is our Neighbours, but content our selves with what we have; that we revenge not injuries, or grow angry at Contempt; but shew forth the Fruits of the Spirit in Peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness and meekness. That we value not our selves above the real Merits of those Gifts, which either Nature, Grace, or Fortune hath bestowed upon us. That we restrain our bodily Appetites from the excessive use of Meat and Drink, and Venery; that we indulge them no farther than answering the End for which they were given us, which is the Re-*

Psal. 119.

15, 27.

Psal. 19. 7,

8, 9.

2 Chron.

20, 20.

Psal. 37. 4.

Psal. 119. 127

Mat. 22. 7

Col. 3. 2.

1 John

2. 15.

Mat. 10. 28

1 Pet. 2. 1.

Heb. 13. 5.

Eph. 4. 3. 1.

Gal. 5. 22.

1 Pet. 5. 5.

Phil. 2. 3

Rom. 12. 10

1 Pet. 2. 11.

1 Cor. 9. 25.

1 Cor. 6. 18

1 Cor. 9. 27.

freshment of Nature and the Preservation of Mankind, and not, (as too many make them) the unhappy Occasions of those notorious and crying Sins, Drunkenness, Gluttony, and Whoredom. Lastly, that we be moderate in the Use and Enjoyment of Pleasures and Recreations, enjoying them no further than as they serve to refresh our wearied Bodies, and restore the languid Faculties of our Souls, to their sprightly Operations. In a due Observance of all these things consists the great Duty of Sobriety. And these I take to be the best Proofs of a * *sound Mind*, which is what the Greek and original Word signifieth.

And thus having shewn you what it is to deny Ungodliness, and wordly Lusts, and what to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present World, I am to tell you next, that *This do and thou shalt live*; the Practice of these Duties will most certainly give you abundant Reason to expect with Comfort; or look for the blessed Hope and glorious Appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. And therefore this, amongst other Arguments, is what I would insist upon, to press you to the faithful Observance of the forementioned Duties. But besides this great and general Motive, there are some other Topicks of Argument, or Heads of Discourse, by which I intend (more largely in my Sermons) to dissuade you from the foremention'd Sins, and persuade you to the Practice of these Religious Duties.

And my Dissuasions from these Sins shall be drawn,

First, From the great Slavery and Drudgery of our Lusts and Vices.

Secondly, From the Consideration of their being the most disingenous, and ungrateful Returns of the most inestimable Mercies.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, From the Consideration of their being very prejudicial to all Societies.

Fourthly, From the ill Effects they have upon our Souls, Bodies and Estates.

Fifthly, And Lastly, from the Certainty of their betraying Men into eternal Ruin and Destruction in the other World.

And my Persuasions to the Duties of Religion shall be taken.

First, From their Agreeableness to the present Circumstances of humane Nature.

Secondly, From this Consideration, viz. that these Duties of Religion directly consult the Good of our Souls, Bodies, and Estates.

Thirdly, From the Consideration that there are great Assistances given us, to render these Duties not only easie, but pleasant to us.

Fourthly, And Lastly, that the Practice of our Duty is the indispensable Condition of our future Happiness, the only ground upon which we can reasonably look for that blessed Hope and the glorious Appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

First, I would dissuade you from the fore-mentioned Sins, upon Consideration of the great Slavery and Drudgery of them. Thus the impious disowning God in our Thoughts, and the more monstrous Denial of him in our Actions, fills the Mind with such uneasie Scruples and Horrors, as are never to be stilled; Mens vain and unnecessary Curiosity serves only to puff them up with Pride, which is directly opposite to the Charity that edifieth; 1 Cor. 8. 2

and therefore when Men are not content to rest in the plain wholesom Words of our Lord Jesus Christ, they are scarce fit for humane Society; because by being Proud and doting about questions and strifes of Words, they unhappily occasion envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of Men of corrupt Minds, and

1 Tim. 6. therefore St. Paul adviseth his Son Timothy
3, 4, 5. from such to withdraw himself.

Again, the Disorders of our Wills, in pursuing Misery under the false Appearance of Good, rob us of our true Satisfaction, and in exchange thereof give us nothing but real disappointments. And so Men's inordinate desires hurry them upon strange and unaccountable Attempts, betray them into Injustice, Passion, and Revenge, besides the many distracting Cares and Fears, to which, at the same time, they expose their unhappy Souls. Lastly, their rebellious Lusts and Appetites put them oftentimes upon hard Service, make them toil and sweat for the gratification of them, and so in a literal sense they become mere Slaves and Drudges to them, and accordingly the holy

Hab. 2. 13. Scriptures represent such Men as *wearying themselves to commit Iniquity, and to labour in the very Fire, to spend their Strength for nought, to sell themselves*

1 Kings

21. 25.

John 8. 34. *(as 'tis said of Ahab) to work Wickedness.* So true is our Saviour's Assertion, *whosoever committeth Sin is the Servant of Sin*, a Servant too that gets no-

Isa. 55. 2. *thing for his Pains, but spends his Labour for that which satisfieth not.* For *what Fruit had ye*

Rom. 6. 21. *of those things whereof ye are now ashamed; says the Apostle to those who had once been the Servants of Sin, for End of those things is Death. Nothing you see, but Shame and Death is to be gotten by such unprofitable Service, and these will prove but a sorry Recompence for all that Labour and Vexation, which you see the Sinner must be condemned unto, in the Gratification of his Lusts.*

Secondly,

Secondly, Consider again, that they are the most disingenuous and ungrateful Returns of the most numerous and inestimable Mercies. God's Redemption of the World, by the Incarnation and Death of his Son, is an admirable Instance of the Love of both to Mankind, and received no little Addition, by being free on their Part, and undeserved on ours; they had no Interest to promote, no by ends to serve, nothing inviting in us, no Argument of any sort to move them to it, but only infinite Kindness and Compassion, beholding the Miseries of wretched Humanity, disposed the Father to send his only begotten Son, and the Son to take upon him our Miseries, make them his own, and that too, by dying for us that were his Enemies, and yet dying for us, to procure us the greatest Blessings, such as a Freedom from the Power and Punishment of our Sins, from the Malice of Satan, from the Sting of Death, and to settle us in a state of Holiness here, and Happiness hereafter. Now there is nothing can thwart this generous Love, or baffle all it's gracious Designs, but our Sins; which are so contrary to the Purity of his Divine Nature, as well as to his gracious Designs upon us, that he cannot but hate and abhor them. They wound and crucifie his Son afresh, they vex and grieve his holy Spirit, and therefore to entertain them against all these endearing Obligations to the contrary, would be monstrous Ingratitude, such as wants a Parallel, and was never named among the Gentiles; for what greater Argument, can we have of our Insensibility of the Divine Favours towards us, if these inexpressible ones cannot work upon our Ingenuity so far, as to banish our Lusts, those implacable Enemies both to God, and * our own Souls; we are certainly lost to all that is tender and apprehensive in humane Nature, if such mighty Benefits can-

Deut. 32. 6.

John 3. 16.

Rom. 3. 24.

— 5. 6, 7, 8.

Job 22. 2, 3.

1 John 4.

9. 10.

Ez. 16. 6.

Isa. 53. 4.

5. 6.

Mat. 1. 21.

Heb. 2.

14, 15.

1 Thess.

1. 10.

Tit. 2. 4.

Heb. 5. 9.

Psal. 5. 4.

Heb. 6. 6.

Eph. 4. 30.

* Heb. 10.

28, 29.

not move us, to express our grateful sense of them, in suitable returns of Care and Endeavour, not only to *abstain from those fleshly Lusts*, **1 Pet. 2. 11.** *which war against the Soul*, but to exchange them for such good Dispositions, as may move us to express our thankfulness to God for all his Benefits, in Arts of new Obedience to him.

Psalm 107. 34. *Thirdly*, it may be further considered that these Lusts and Vices, which I am now persuading you to deny, are very prejudicial to all Societies; for besides that they justly expose Men to the Judgments of God, *Who turns a fruitful Land into Barrenness, for the Wickedness of them that dwell therein*, they have a natural tendency to introduce Mischief. Thus it's evident without any further proof of Argument, that **Prov. 23.** Drunkenness, Gluttony and Whoredom, breed Diseases, which weaken the Force and Strength **21, 29, 30.** of a Nation; Malice, Envy and Revenge **— 7. 26.** render Men very troublesome to others, as well as to themselves, turn them into Beasts of Prey, fit them more for a *Den of Lyons*, Wolves and **James 3. 16.** Tygers, than the Society of rational Creatures; and so Pride, Covetousness, Injustice and Perfidiousness administer occasion of Contentions, and set men directly together by the Ears, so much reason have we to answer or resolve **St. James** his Question in the Affirmative, from **James 4. 1.** *whence come Wars and Fightings among you, come they not hence, even from your Lusts which war in your Members?*

And as Men's Lusts have thus a very ill Influence upon them, as private Members of Society: So they fail not to communicate their Malignity to them in their publick Capacities, as Governours; for when Magistrates are not *just, ruling in the Fear of God*, they weaken their Authority, lessen themselves in the Eyes of their People, and make their Subjects very uneasie

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ease and unmanageable; and on the other hand, when Subjects by submitting to their Lusts, violate and abuse their Conscience, they deprive the Publick of it's best Security of their Obedience. For this is the only firm and lasting Principle of Obedience, which can hold Men fast, when all other Obligations to it, will fly in pieces. He that is Subject *only for Wrath, and not for Conscience sake*, will be sure to submit no longer than till he can resist with Safety. But he that is subject *for Conscience sake*, will continue so, as long as his Conscience keeps up her Authority, which when his Lusts have once dethroned, then farewell all Submission and Obedience; nothing then succeeds but *Strife, and Contention, and every evil Work*; and this will turn to our own great Disadvantage, being by Nature not only fitted for, but made to stand in need of, those Benefits of Society of which our Lusts are very destructive.

James 3.16.

Fourthly, Ye may please to consider further, that Ungodliness and worldly Lusts have very ill Effects upon the Souls, Bodies and Estates of Men. Thus as to the Soul, Sensuality and Intemperance naturally darken the Understanding, for these by overcharging Nature load the animal Spirits, keep them low, and render them gross, which by being low, cast a Damp upon the Soul, and hinder her in her sprightly Operations. So Anger, Envy, Malice and Revenge pervert our Judgments, raise such Prejudices in our Minds, as hinder our clear and due Perceptions of things. Sensual Pleasures and Delights overcast the Mind with such thick Mists of Darknness, that neither are our Understandings able to discern, or our Wills to pursue, their true and chief Good. Lastly, the extravagant Motions of our wild Affections, and the rebellions of our brutish

Eph. 4.
18, 19.

Rom. 7.15.

Appetites against our Reason, hurry us into all manner of unaccountable Follies, make us forget our selves, and dispose us to act *like the Beasts that perish*. Besides many other necessary, but uneasie Effects of these Disorders, and Violences offered to our Reason, such are the ungrateful Recoilings of Nature, the uneasie and perpetual Strugglings between the *Flesh* and the *Spirit*. The miserable Distractions of their Minds which are drawn first one way and then another by contrary and impetuous Passions, the great and just confusion of Face, Shame, and Self-condemnation, the continual frettings at their past Follies, their grievous Suspicions of an After-reckoning, their insupportable Horror and anguish of Mind, arising from their unwelcome Reflections on their past Guilt, these are such intolerable Mischiefs, as are enough to discourage the most daring Sinner, from giving any longer Entertainment to those Lusts, which are the unhappy causes of them; especially if it be considered,

Pro. 18. 14.
Ma. 57. 20.
21.

Secondly, That they incommode not only our Souls, but our Bodies too, by robbing them of their Health and Ease together. Thus the forementioned Vices, Luxury, Drunkenness and Wantonness have a natural Tendency to ruin our Stomachs, spoil our Digestion, Corrupt our Blood, consume our Spirits, and waste our Strength. Envy, Malice, Discontent and Passion rot our Bones, sour the Humours, stir them up to Excess, and put the whole Body into Combustion. Covetousness with all it's Train of carking cares and distracting Thoughts, drives away Sleep, one of the supports of Nature, oppresses the Heart, supps the Spirits, sets the Humors upon the dam, and in what can we think all these Disorders should end, but in all manner of Disorder Paroxysms, Epilepses, Catarhs, and I know not what hard Names, and harder things,

Pro. 14. 30.

as being the natural Effects of these Lusts. And these ill Effects me thinks should the more effectually prevail with wicked Men to forsake their Sins by how much the more they value their Bodies above their Souls, and therefore may well be supposed to use more care, in shunning those Things, which are destructive to them.

Thirdly, It may be consider'd also that your Lusts will as certainly ruin your Estates, as they do your Bodies, or your Souls, and that not only by hastening the just Judgments of God upon them; but by that natural Tendency which there is in some particular Vices to consume them. I need to instance only in Sensuality and Revenge; as to the former I will leave you to judge, whether men cannot by eating fine, and drinking hard, and using their Palates to both, (and so render the Gratification of them necessary) whether they cannot by these means sooner spend an Estate than satiate their craving Appetites. For an Estate though large, is yet limited, but so are not our Desires, and therefore the one must needs be much sooner spent, than the other. As to our Revenge, how chargeable the Gratification of that is, every Lawyer can inform you, and now since it is so chargeable to be wicked, our Lusts being very expensive to us, 'tis undoubtedly ill Husbandry, and therefore worth no Mans while, to give them Entertainment, especially considering in the

Last place, what is worst of all, and that is, that they most certainly betray men into eternal Ruin and Destruction in the other World. For misery (as ye have partly seen) is the necessary Consequence of Wickedness, and therefore will be so in all Places, and at all times; so that Men's Lusts and Vicees which they have cherished in this World, accompanying their Souls into the other, will still work the

same

same direful Effects upon them as they did here, only with this Difference, that whereas they have here some refreshing Intermissions, some little Diversion from the foremention'd Miseries, they will there be continual and heighten'd to the utmost Capacities of their Souls to receive them. So that the unhappy Sufferers will be condemned to lye roaring upon the Racks of their guilty Minds, without Intermision, and without end. And accordingly we are in the Scripture assured, that the

Mark 9.44. *Worm there never dieth, nor the Fire ever quenched,*

Rev. 20. 10. *but that they are tormented Day and Night for ever and ever. And yet this is to be the Portion*

Rom. 8. 13. *of those that live after the Flesh, so that he who indulgeth his Lusts and Vices here must expect no Indulgence or Favour from God hereafter;*

1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. *for know ye not that the Unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God? be not deceived, neither Fornicators, nor Idolaters, nor Adulterers, nor*

Effeminate, nor Abusers of themselves with Man-kind, nor Thieves, nor Covetous, nor Drunkards, nor Revilers, nor Extortioners, shall inherit the Kingdom of God; but what is worse, shall have

Mat. 25. 46 *their Portion assigned them in that dismal Place, where there is nothing but Weeping, Wailing and Gnashing of Teeth. Consider seriously of these things, and then tell me whether ye have not sufficient reason to Deny Ungodliness, and worldly Lusts.*

But as this is the least Part of our Duty; So the greatest Motives are yet to be proposed to you, those I mean which are to encourage you to *live Soberly, Righteously and Godly, in this present World.* And here it may be considered,

First, That the Observance of these Duties is very agreeable to the present Circumstances of our humane Nature. Thus our Duties towards God, as owning him in our Thoughts, Words, and Actions, hearing his holy Word, Praying

to him and receiving the Sacrament, are all easie to be performed by us, and very beneficial to us when they are performed. Our Justice to our Neighbour in all his Capacities and Relations; and our Charity to him in all his Necessities, naturally tend to our Good, both as private Persons & as Members of Society. As private Persons, they promote the good of our Souls, Bodies and Estates, (as I shall shew you presently) and as Members of Society, they consult our Good, in that they promote mutual Good-will, Love, Peace, Unity, &c. Thus Justice preserving our own as well as others Rights, makes us easie in our Stations, and promotes mutual Confidence in one another, which would naturally produce Peace and Unity, and so our Charity to our Brethren gains us an universal Love and Respect from Men, together with a Readiness to relieve our Necessities, upon Occasion, in a grateful return. Lastly, the unviolated Authority of Conscience disposeth Magistrates to *rule well*, and Subjects to be strictly obedient to them; thus Religion in all its Parts is so good natur'd that it tends to make Men peaceable and beneficial towards one another, and so advance the Interest of Mankind in general. And no less profitable is it in the

1 Tim. 4. 8.

Second Place to every private Man in particular. For it consults the Good of our Souls, Bodies and Estates. As to our Souls,

In our Observance of our Duty towards God, and worshipping him suitably to his Nature, our Understandings are directly led to the Contemplation of the noblest Truths, our Wills to their embraces of their chiefest Good, and our Affections are hereby fixed on what they ought to be, *viz. the Things above*. And so all the Faculties of the Soul being kept in their due Order, and employed to their proper Ends, our Souls live and act according to the Law of their

Pf. 73. 25,
26,
27.

their own Nature, and consequently must needs enjoy great Peace and Tranquility. Because there are no Disorders of the Passions, no Fears of Guilt to interrupt it. And therefore great
 Ps. 119. 165 *peace have they who love thy Law, and nothing shall offend them.*

Secondly, The Practice of the forementioned Duties consult the good of our Bodies, and that by preserving them in a perfect state of Health; for what can contribute more thereto, than a chearful temper of Mind, and a moderate use of Meat and Drink and Recreations, and these things Religion teacheth and requi-
 Phil. 4. 4. reth of us.
 1 Thess. 5. 6.
 1 Pet. 4. 7.
 1 Cor. 9. 25.

Besides, the Practice of Religion may reasonably be supposed to procure a more than ordinary Blessing upon these prudent, and probable Means of Health, from that God who
 1 Sam. 2. 6. *killeth and maketh alive, who bringeth down to the Grave, and bringeth up.* And he accordingly has promised, in the Scriptures, Health and long Life as a Reward to the Practice of Religion; for *length of Days is in her right hand, and she is a Tree of life to them that lay hold upon her.* Wherefore it was an Advice well becoming the the Wisdom of him that gave it. *My Son forget not my Law, but let thine Heart keep my Commandments; for length of Days and long Life and Peace shall they add unto thee.*
 Prov. 3. 16, 18.

Lastly, the Practice of the forementioned Duties brings down and entails a Blessing upon our Estates; and that not only by engaging the Kindness of Heaven, to have a more especial eye of Providence towards us, both by directing us to those Duties which naturally promote our wordly Interest. Thus Justice and Honesty bring Men into Repute, that gives them an Opportunity of enlarging their Credit of Trade, That their Stocks, and These their

their Revenues; and though Fraud and Falshood may sometimes chance to bring us in a present Advantage, yet when it is once detected, we lose more Reputation, and with it more Customers, than ever the dishonest Gain can compensate, so that Truth and fair Dealing will bear a Man out, when little and Marking Tricks will fail him. For as the Wise-man observes, *he that walketh uprightly walketh surely.* And so Temperance and Chastity prevent all unnecessary and extravagant Expenses; whereas they who indulge their sensual Appetites, to the Violation of their Conscience, ruin their Estates to rights; if we may believe our own Observation, or the the Wiseman's Word, who tells us, *that he who loves Pleasure shall be a Poor Man, and he that loveth Wine and Oyl,* (i. e.) love them to Excess, *shall not be rich.* Lastly, Industry and Diligence in our Callings not only cut off some Opportunities of Extravagance, but directly tend to encrease our Fortunes; Reason and Experience both, confirming this as an undeniable Truth, that *the Hand of the Diligent maketh rich.* So that when all is done, 'tis most certainly the best Husbandry to be Religious.

Pro. 10. 9.

Pro. 21. 17.

Prov. 10. 4.

Thirdly, I would further urge you to the Practice of the forementioned Duties, from the great Assistances that are given us, to render them not only easie, but pleasant to us. For God has recommended them to our faithful Observance, with all the most powerful Means and Arguments, to engage our Practice of them; *he has shewed thee, O Man what is Good; and what does the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love Mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.* He has not only proposed these Duties to us in the Gospel, with the Promises and Terrors of the Life that now is, and of that which

Micah 6. 8.

1 Tim. 4. 8. 1

- which is to come, with the *Examples* of the best of Men, especially with that more pregnant one of our *Blessed Saviour*, together with all those prevalent Motives arising from what he did and suffered for us, with those mighty Arguments that may be drawn from his Life, Death, Resurrection, Ascension, and his Return to judge both the Quick and the Dead; with Pleasure and Peace from the Nature of the Duties themselves, and with all the Endearments of Love and Kindness from him that enjoins them; he not only urgeth us (I say) to our Duty upon these many and weighty Considerations, and that with all the Importunity possible to gain our Practice, but has also promised the Assistance of his *Almighty Spirit* to make all things easie and pleasant to us. So that if we do but set our selves in good earnest to the Practice of the forementioned Duties, if we do but heartily beg the Divine Grace, which, we are assured, shall be sufficient for us, and then apply our own Endeavours in a faithful and diligent use of it, 'tis impossible that we should fail of Success; for I can do all things, says the Apostle, through Christ that strengthens me. And this Omnipotent Assistance we may have, upon the easie terms of putting up a Petition for it; for God has engaged to give the *holy Spirit* to them that ask him. And what more easie condition can we desire than this, that if we seek we shall find; if we ask we shall receive, receive too that which, though we cannot of our selves, will yet empower us, through our joint Endeavours, to do our Duty with Pleasure and Delight, and so render us both happy here and hereafter too; for This,

In the 4th and last Place is (or ought to be) a further Inducement to our Practice of all the Duties of Religion, because God has made our Duty the indispensable Condition of our future Happiness, and (as I shewed you in the

Mat. 7. 21.

Rom. 8. 13.

beginning of this Discourse) the necessary Preparation for it. So that 'tis just as necessary for us to be Religious, or to do our Duty, as it is to go to Heaven, or to keep out of the flames of Hell. And this ought to be a Consideration of great Weight with us, because whatever our Condition be in the other World, whether a happy or a miserable one, it must be so for ever; so that we had need give all diligence to make our calling and Election sure. Heb. 12. 14
1 Tim. 4. 8.
Luke 16. 26
2 Pet. 1. 10.

Thus having, I hope, by these Considerations convinced you of the Necessity of doing the prementioned Duties, my next Work is to tell you, that what is thus necessary to be done, at the time or other, had best be done now out of hand. And indeed unless we set our selves to the immediate Practice of these Duties, 'tis plain that we are not heartily convinced of the Necessity of doing them at all. Because our continuance in our Sins do too manifestly prove our Good-liking to them; and if we will approve and cherish them, we are not in a good Earnest reconciled to the Practice of the contrary Duties; because we can neither approve of two different things, nor act two different ways, at the same time. So that if we be the Servants of Sin, (as our Intentions to continue in it for a while plainly shew) we cannot be the Servants of Christ. Either therefore we must quit our Sins and our favourable thoughts of them immediately upon the Spot, or else foregoe our Intentions, to fall to the practice of Religion some Years hence; or he that is a true Convert, is supposed to be perfectly convinced of the Mischiefs of his Sin, and the reasonableness of his Duty; and therefore immediately strikes in with his first Conviction, which, by being full and clear prevents him making those little Shifts and frivolous Excuses, which others take sanctuary in, to excuse their Delay of this necessary Work.

Though

Though with what little, or rather against what great reason, may be made appear from the following Considerations.

First, 'Tis extremely necessary that Men immediately betake themselves to their Duty, because it is (as appears from what hath been already said) of very great Concern and Consequence to them, and what is so, we are apt, in other Cases, to bestow our first and chiefest Care upon. Thus we see in worldly Affairs, how every prudent Man is, more especially, careful to drive on, what he calls the main Chance, & is at little ease till this be secured, or at least, is in a fair way of being so. Now would *Mat. 5. 33.* but the Children of Light be as wise in their Generation as the Children of this World are, they would be as solicitous about the Concerns of their Souls, as these Men are, of their Bodies. They would no more delay securing the Life of the one, than these men do, of the other, when it lies at Stake, which if any Man should be so foolhardy as to neglect, and by that Neglect lose his Life, which his care would have saved, he would be deservedly thought to die like a Fool. And certainly much more would that Christian deserve the Imputation of Folly, who, when his eternal Interest is in Danger, shall yet suffer it to continue so, and not exert his utmost Endeavours for the Security of it, and consequently embrace the first Occasion to secure it in; especially considering in the

Second Place, that the Nature of Religion is such, as requires a great deal at our hands, before it gives us any Right or Title to that great and necessary Reward; without which we are undone for ever; our sensual Appetites must
Rom. 8. 13. be subdued, the Deeds of the Body mortified,
Eph. 2. 22, our Desires resigned, our Affections weaned
23, 24. from this World, and raised to the things
Col. 3. 2. above, in short, our Minds must be transformed
 from

from Carnal to Spiritual, and this requires more
 me and pains than most Men think for; let
 men but try the Experiment upon one Lust,
 and see what Pangs and Throes of Mind, what
 struggles and Conflicts, what Watchings and
 prayers, are necessary before they can make a
 perfect conquest of that one. And then they
 will tell me, that a greater and more early
 care, than e're they dream't of, is but requi-
 site to carry on the great Design of Religion
 which is the Life and Happiness of their Souls)
 with good Success. And therefore Religion
 is wisely, as well as kindly, provided us with
 various helps, both to prevent the Trouble of
 forming a bad Life, and to promote an early
 and successful progress in a Good one, to which
 purpose we are, when Children, admitted in-
 to the Christian Religion by Baptism, and by
 being therein made *Members of Christ, Children of*
God, and Inheritours of the Kingdom of Heaven, we
 engage all the Powers of Heaven on our side,
 to enable us to begin, continue and end our
 lives, in a constant Observance of our Duty;
 at which end, there are Securities given of
 our being educated in the Truth; and as we
 grow up, we have the daily Administration of
 the Word and Sacrament, the one, to put us
 in mind of our Baptismal Vow, the other,
 to give us the Opportunity of renewing it.
 We have also the inward Influences of the Di-
 vine Grace to encourage, and assist our constant
 Endeavours of proceeding on from one degree
 of Grace to another in our Christian Course; ^{2 Pet 1. 5,}
 so we are required to add to our faith *Vertue,*
Vertue, Knowledge, to Knowledge, Temperance, and ^{6, 7, 8.}
and so to grow in Grace, and in the Know-
ledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. And ^{— 3. 18}
 finally, to perfect holiness in the fear of God. By ^{2 Cor. 7. 1.}
 which you plainly see, that to defer, or
 put off our Duty for the present, with design
 to betake our selves to the practice of it, 20.
 or

or 30 Years hence, or at the latter end of our Days, is directly contrary to the Nature and Design of Religion, and is an open Violation of a Breach of our sacred Vows and Obligations made in our Baptism; which is so far from being innocent, that it is highly sinful, and will infallibly betray Men into eternal Damnation in the other World, if Death should chance to cut them off (as 'tis probable he will) before they have executed their Intentions of conforming to the Duties of Religion; and 'tis yet more unlikely, that they may not have (what they so much trust to) the Opportunity of being Religious afterwards: As will further appear, if we consider,

James 4.
14.

Prov. 27.1.

Job 7.6,7,
8, 9.

Thirdly, That as this Life is the only Time of Probation, on which our Eternal Happiness or Misery depends; so it is but a very uncertain Cast, to have things of so great Moment depend upon it, for *What is our Life? it is even a Vapour that appeareth for a little Time, and then vanisheth away*; a Vapour, which we can take no Hold of, but, for all we know, may slip through our Fingers before to morrow Morning: So that the only Time we can be sure of, is the present, and That is so swift, that whilst we are thinking and speaking of It, it is gone, and past Recovery: And therefore there is no Delaying with Things of so slippery a Nature, and so quick a Motion. 'Tis in vain to think, that Time should leave its natural Property, to stop a while, and wait our Leisure; it were Impious as well as Vain, to desire, that God would alter the Nature of Things, to gratifie our lazy Humour; no, fond Men! Time as it stays for no Man, so, (whether ye will think fit to enjoy it or not,) will most certainly hurry you on to a long Eternity. And therefore, to make suitable Preparation for This, ye had need be as nimble as Time it self, and employ every Minute that is given you to the best Advantage; whereby

whereby ye should best comply with the wise
 Design of the Donor of it; for how liberal so-
 ever God has been of all his other Blessings to
 us, yet this of Time he has been pleased to
 dispense in a less plentiful manner, choosing ra-
 ther to give it by Minutes, to signifie how pre-
 cious It is, and that we should be sparing and
 chary of it, diligent to Redeem That which is Eph. 5. 15,
 waste, and careful to improve That which is to 16.
 come, *To Day therefore, whilst it is called to Day,* 1 Pet. 4. 2.
 we are exhorted to the Practice of your Duty, lest any of Heb. 3. 13.
 be hardened through the Deceitfulness of Sin: For,
 Fourthly, Supposing that God should be so
 kind to us beyond our Deserts; though not our
 Desires, as to prolong our Days, yet it were un-
 reasonable to expect, that the Divine Grace
 should be always at our Beck, and continually
 wait our Leisure. This were to desire, that
 the Grace of God would be more kind and
 constant to us, than we are to our selves, that
 whereas we intend to bestow no more than our
 expiring Breath, in calling upon God, we would
 have his Grace attend us, through the several
 stages of our Sins, and court us to our Duty,
 to the very last Gasps. But, *Be not deceived, what- Gal. 6. 7.*
 ever a Man soweth, that shall he also reap. What Prov. 2. 1.
 God threatned to the Old World, he will most 24, 28.
 certainly, make good to all old habitual Sin-
 ners, viz. *That his Spirit shall not always strive Gen. 6. 3.*
 with Men; but, *the Things belonging to their Peace, Luke 19.*
if they will not know them now in this their Day, 42.
will, most assuredly, be hid from their Eyes. And
 his our Blessed Saviour has signified to us in the
 Parable of the Talents, where he says, at the
 conclusion of that Parable, *from him that hath Matth. 25:*
shall be taken away even That which he seemeth 29.
 to have. It is therefore the most seasonable and
 wholesome Advice, that either the Prophet could
 give, or We could take, viz. *Seek ye the Lord Isaiah 55.*
whilst he may be found, call ye upon him whilst He 6.
is near. For now is the accepted Time, now is the 2 Cor. 6. 2.
 Day

or 30 Years hence, or at the latter end of our Days, is directly contrary to the Nature and Design of Religion, and is an open Violation of Breach of our sacred Vows and Obligations made in our Baptism; which is so far from being innocent, that it is highly sinful, and will infallibly betray Men into eternal Damnation in the other World, if Death should chance to cut them off (as 'tis probable he will) before they have executed their Intentions of conforming to the Duties of Religion; and 'tis yet more unlikely, that they may not have (what they so much trust to) the Opportunity of being Religious afterwards: As will further appear, if we consider,

Thirdly, That as this Life is the only Time of Probation, on which our Eternal Happiness or Misery depends; so it is but a very uncertain Cast, to have things of so great Moment depend upon it, for *What is our Life? it is even a Vapour, that appeareth for a little Time, and then vanisheth away*; a Vapour, which we can take no Hold of, but, for all we know, may slip through our Fingers before to morrow Morning: So that the only Time we can be sure of, is the present, and That is so swift, that whilst we are thinking and speaking of It, it is gone, and past Recovery: And therefore there is no Delaying with Things of so slippery a Nature, and so quick a Motion. 'Tis in vain to think, that Time should leave its natural Property, to stop a while, and wait our Leisure; it were Impious as well as Vain, to desire, that God would alter the Nature of Things, to gratifie our lazy Humour; no, fond Men! Time as it stays for no Man, so, (whether ye will think fit to enjoy it or not,) will most certainly hurry you on to a long Eternity. And therefore, to make suitable Preparation for This, ye had need be as nimble as Time it self, and employ every Minute that is given you to the best Advantage; whereby

James 4.
14.

Prov. 27.1.

Job 7.6,7,
8, 9.

whereby ye should best comply with the wise
 design of the Donor of it; for how liberal so-
 ever God has been of all his other Blessings to
 us, yet this of Time he has been pleased to
 dispense in a less plentiful manner, choosing ra-
 ther to give it by Minutes, to signify how pre-
 cious It is, and that we should be sparing and
 scrupulous of it, diligent to *Redeem* That which is Eph. 5. 15,
 cheap, and careful to improve That which is to 16.
 come, *To Day therefore, whilst it is called to Day,* 1 Pet. 4. 2.
 we are exhorted to the Practice of your Duty, lest any of Heb. 3. 13.
 be hardened through the Deceitfulness of Sin: For,
 Fourthly, Supposing that God should be so
 kind to us beyond our Deserts; though not our
 Desires, as to prolong our Days, yet it were un-
 reasonable to expect, that the Divine Grace
 should be always at our Beck, and continually
 wait our Leisure. This were to desire, that
 the Grace of God would be more kind and
 constant to us, than we are to our selves, that
 whereas we intend to bestow no more than our
 expiring Breath, in calling upon God, we would
 have his Grace attend us, through the several
 stages of our Sins, and court us to our Duty,
 to the very last Gasps. But, *Be not deceived, what-* Gal. 6. 7.
ever a Man soweth, that shall he also reap. What Prov. 21.
 God threatned to the Old World, he will most 24, 28.
 certainly, make good to all old habitual Sin-
 ners, viz. *That his Spirit shall not always strive* Gen. 6. 3.
with Men; but, the Things belonging to their Peace, Luke 19.
if they will not know them now in this their Day, 42.
 will, most assuredly, be hid from their Eyes. And
 thus our Blessed Saviour has signified to us in the
 Parable of the Talents, where he says, at the
 Conclusion of that Parable, *from him that hath* Matth. 25.
that, shall be taken away even That which he seemeth 29.
to have. It is therefore the most seasonable and
 wholesome Advice, that either the Prophet could
 give, or We could take, viz. *Seek ye the Lord* Isaiah 55.
whilst he may be found, call ye upon him whilst He 6.
is near. For now is the accepted Time, now is the 2 Cor. 6. 2.
 Day

Day of Salvation. But as for the Time to come 'tis every whit as uncertain, whether we shall fall to the Practice of our Duty hereafter, if we live, as whether we shall live to Hereafter, if we fall to the Practice of our Duty. For if God should now withdraw his Grace (as Men by their resolved Contempt of it justly provoke him,) they are left in as great an Incapacity of becoming Religious, as if He had withdrawn their Lives: *It being as possible to repent without Life, when we are Dead, as without God's Grace when we are Living,* (as a late Divine has observed)

Dr. Scot's *Christ. Life,* So that here are two Hazards to be run at once. Part First. which, if either fail, (and yet both are out of our Power,) will irrecoverably ruine our eternal Salvation; which is staked upon Them; and those are, that we shall certainly live to be Old and as certainly have the Divine Grace to become Religious when we are so; whereas

Job 24.22. (God knows) we may be dead by the next Hour, and perhaps already are, or at least will be, (if we resolve to delay our Reformation, that is, *dead also in Trespases and Sins.* For,

Eph. 2. 1. *Fifthly,* If we defer the Practice of our Duty it will grow every Day more difficult than it is now, and so That which is now easie to be performed, will not hereafter be done without great deal of Trouble; for all the Time we indulge our Lusts, we do but the more strengthen them against our Seives; for bad Inclinations, the longer they are let alone, the more they improve; and vitious Habits, the oftner they are repeated, grow but the more confirmed and inveterate: For, what a mighty Power there is in a Habit in general, may be seen in almost every Concern of Life: How easie and almost necessarily do Men those Things whereof they have the Habit, insomuch that they cannot without trouble act otherwise, till they have broken the Habit, either by Dissipation or a contrary Practice. What then shall we thin

of the Habits of Sin, which bend the Sinner to vicious Courses, not only by Means of their strong and natural Tendency that is in Them, as Habits, but moreover and above receive an additional Strength from the too too willing Inclinations of Men, which strike in with the Habit, and by a wonderful Force hurry the poor Sinner into Wickedness, almost beyond a natural Possibility of a Recovery, especially when such an Habit hath been a long Time settled and confirmed in him? For it then becomes a Governing Principle, and is as it were, a Second Nature; so that he is almost under the fatal Necessity of continuing in It; And accordingly we read in Scripture of some Sinners who are arrived to that *Perfection in Vice*, that they sin with a peculiar Glee, *working all uncleanness with Greediness*; they commit their Sins with such a vehement Thirst, that they are said to *drink Iniquity like Water*; and are therefore become such perfect Slaves to their Vices, that *They are sold under Sin, led captive by Satan at his Will*. Now this is the Effect of those sinful Habits, which the Delays of a good Life, or (which is all one) the Practice of a bad one, do necessarily bring us under. And this is an Effect, which, by cutting off our chief Hopes of being truly Religious, after a long and habitual Course of Sinning, renders it highly reasonable, nay, even necessary to *make haste, and delay not to keep God's Commandments*; especially considering in the

Sixth Place, That the longer we defer this great Work, the less able shall we be on our *Parts* to perform it. For when Sicknes or Old Age comes (the Seasons I suppose, to which Sinners intend to put off the Practice of their duty,) they bring a World of Troubles along with Them; which must needs weaken the Powers of our Souls, and indispose them for that great Work, which we have cut out for Them:

Them : For does not Experience testify, That every little Indisposition of Body indisposes our Souls also? Do we not find, that Sickness many times impairs our Memories, raises in us such Heats and Fumes as confound our Senses, and distract our Thoughts, if not rob us wholly of the present Use of our Understandings? And when we can neither remember, perceive, nor understand, but are all Agony, Confusion, and Distraction, we are very unfit Persons to perform a Work, that requires a perfect Memory, a sound Judgment, and steady Resolution; a perfect Memory to call to mind the many Failings and Miscarriages of a long and sinful Life; A sound Judgment to state the Case fairly between God and our own Souls; and steady Resolutions to live and die in Acts of new Obedience. This is the least we must do, and yet it is many times more, than what our Sickness will suffer us to perform; the Violence of some Distempers being such as takes away at once, our Reason and our Senses, and with them all possibility of Reforming: But supposing that through the Blessing of God, and an extraordinary strength of Nature, we escape this dreadful Enemy to a late Repentance, and arrive to an unrelenting Old Age; yet we can't in reason think This a proper time to begin the *Mortification* of our Lusts, the *Renovation* of our Natures, and *Our growth in Grace*. For is it likely we should grow in This, when we have done growing every Way, but in Age and Wickedness? Or, is it possible to revive our perishing Souls, when we our selves are already dead in *Trespases and Sins*? Or, can we hope to conquer with feeble Joints and trembling Knees, those powerful Lusts which have been so long victorious over all our bravest Resolutions? Alas! these Enemies which have been all our Life-long strengthening Themselves against us, are not so easily master'd by us now,

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now that our Strength to resist Them is decayed and gone, so that we cannot now reasonably hope to work any other Mortification upon our Lusts, than what Age has already given Them. This indeed may weaken their Strength in time; but what is that to us? What Old Age of it self doth, is not our Act; nor does it concern us further, than only to shew us, with Reproach and Shame, what we ought to have done, viz. to have made that Act our own, and have mortified our Lusts our selves; for which, we are now beholden to our Old Age: So that whatever Goodness we shall, or can now exert, we may reasonably suspect to be more the Effect of our Impotence and Weakness, than of a sound Judgment and a free Choice; and if so, we cannot assume the Performance of it to our Selves, because, That which is done with hinder'd and disabled Faculties, with an imperfect Knowledge and Consent, is not properly our own *Act and Deed*; and yet this is much the case of old Folks, who, as such, are distemper'd, that is, have all the Faculties of their Souls, the Members of their Bodies; and in short, all their Powers of Action very much worn out, cramp'd, and disabled. So that to put off the doing our Duty to a Time of Sickneſs, or Old Age, is next Door to not doing it at all; and therefore we must not think to put it off *from Day to Day*, but now or never resolve upon it: For,

Lastly, Now is the most proper Season to do our Duty in. For now our Enemies are fewer, and less able to offend us, and We more able to defend our Selves against Them. Now our sinful Habits are not so strong, nor our Sins so numerous as they will be afterwards: And therefore we have now less Work than ever we shall have upon our Hands; and, what is a greater Encouragement, our Faculties are now most vigorous, most fit to engage in this necessary Undertaking; and Now too, is the only Time

to serve God acceptably. Now is the proper Season
to exercise our Graces, to shew the Reality and

Rom. 5. 3.

James I.

12.

Eccles. 11.

9.

James I.

27.

Prov. 23.

26.

Mark 12.

33.

Prov. 14.

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Ecclef. 12.

I.

Hab. 1. 13

Malach. i.

8.

1 Tim. 6.

15.

to serve God acceptably. Now is the proper Season to exercise our Graces, to shew the Reality and Strength of them ; Now, that there are proper Temptations both to try and improve Them. For, 'tis now in *the Days of our Youth* that the World besets us with Enchantments, and that our own Bodies turn Tempters to us : 'Tis now that the Gaities of the World are apt to allure us ! 'Tis now that the Unruliness of our Blood, and the ill Propensities of the Flesh, prompt us to the Breach of those Vows, which we have taken up against Them. So that Now is the proper Season for the Exercise of Religion. For now, if we can resist these unruly Motions, and *keep our Selves unspotted from the World*, we shall manifestly prove our Faith and Piety to be sincere, which will infallibly recommend it to the Divine Acceptance, and afford no little Satisfaction to our Selves. It was therefore an Advice well-becoming the Wisdom of Solomon ; *Remember now thy Creator in the Days of thy Youth, while the evil Days come not, nor the Year draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no Pleasure in them.* For in such a Time of Trouble as Old Age is, (which the Wise Man here describes,) we cannot reasonably hope, that our Souls, without any previous Preparation, should be duly qualify'd to perform any Service acceptable to Him, *who is of purer Eyes than to behold the least Iniquity.* Alas ! all the Faculties of our Souls will, long before that Time, be grown Restive for want of Exercise and Improvement, and what is worse, They will be over-run with our Lusts and Vices. And Now to devote the Powers of our Souls to the Service of our God, when weaken'd as much as possible by our Lusts, would be *to offer him the Blind, the Lame, and the Sick, for Sacrifice :* And should he accept such an Offering at our Hands, *Offer it now to thy Governour, says God, and see if he will be pleased with Thee or accept thy Person ?* Much less will he, *who is King of Kings and Lord*

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of Lords. And indeed, if Sinners would but speak out and tell the Truth, they must needs own, that their Religious Exercises, like all their other Actions of Life, are at that Time of Day very troublesom and uneasie to Them: And would it not be very unreasonable to expect, that God should delight in those Dregs of our Lives, which we our Selves can take no Pleasure in? Sinners surely must have a very mean Opinion both of God and Religion too, to think Themselves fit enough for the Service of Both, when they are disabled and unfit for every thing else: Though properly speaking, it is no Service, but (as you have seen) only the Effect of Impotence and Weakness, that they can then present him with; for what Vertue can there be in Men's insignificant Intentions to begin to be Good, at a time when perhaps they can't (if they would) be actually Bad? This is only in plain English, to have the Thoughts of serving God, when they can serve the Devil no longer: And what a sad Thing is it to live so long in Wickedness, as at length to be forsaken by It? And then, when our Sins have left us, rather than we them, we will even look out for a better Master, and begin to serve God, *who never faileth Them that seek him*: And therefore, Why should he not be Gracious unto us now at last? Why may not we find as much Grace and Favour at our last Minutes as the Labourers did, who came into their Lord's Vineyard at the last Hour, or as the Thief upon the Cross? who could not have converted Later, nor yet had a more comfortable Promise made over to him upon his Conversion, as Late as it was.

Now as to the former of these Instances alledged in Favour of a late Repentance, namely, That of the Labourers going late into the Vineyard, hard to work; it is by Learned Men thought, that the whole Design of that Parable is, only to exhibit or set forth to us the Justice and Goodness

ness of God, intending the Light and Mercies of the Gospel to the Gentiles, and rewarding their late Acceptance of them equal with the *Jews*, that were called before us ; and so it reacheth not in the Opinion of some, to the Case of private Sinners. Though I will (for once) suppose it does ; but withal must observe, That this gives no Encouragement to any Sinner to defer the Reformation of his Life, or the Practice of Religion to the last, no, nor yet to the next Hour ; for supposing the *Eleventh Hour* in the Parable to signifie the Last of our Lives, and that God did accept and reward Those that converted to Him then ; yet it does not appear, that They who were then *Hired into the Vineyard*, or called to Repentance, had rejected more early Invitations to it ; but whether Idleness, or whatever was the Occasion of their late Call and Conversion, this is certain, that at what Hour soever, whether at the First, Sixth, or Ninth, they were called, they immediately obeyed the Motion, and needed not a second

Pfal. 58. 5. Call, as Men now a-days do, *who stop their Ears at the Voice of the Charmers, charming never so wisely ; and so they add to all their Sins this One*, (and that a very great One too,) of Obstinacy and In-corrigibleness, which render their Case different from the Labourers, it being far more unlikely that such stubborn Tempers should be ever wrought unto Repentance and Reformation, especially to that which is sincere ; 'tis far more likely that God, being by their Stubbornness

Rom. 1. 28. provoked, *should give them over to a reprobate Mind.*

And then as to the other Instance of a late Repentance, that of the *Thief on the Cross*. Here I will suppose, (because I know Sinners do) that this late Penitent's Life was as theirs is, but one continued Course of Wickedness, of which he repented not till his last Minutes ; and that as God did graciously pardon him then, so may he forgive them also, if they do but then repent

as heartily as he did ; yet I hope to shew them, that they have no reasonable Encouragement from this Example, to continue in their Wickedness at Present, in hopes of finding Mercy upon their Repentance at Last, or at a dying Hour, as will appear if they consider, That 'tis possible, nay probable, that this Thiet might never have heard of the Name of Jesus before, or if he had, it might not have been proposed to him with sufficient Motives of Credibility ; and if this (as I could shew you we have reason to think) was his Case, it was more his Unhappiness than his Crime, that He converted and believed no sooner. Yet when He was converted and did believe, He lived up strictly to the Terms of the Gospel, that little while he had to live : For he here on the Cross confesseth his Sin ; begs Pardon for it ; *accepts the* Luke 23. *Punishment of his Iniquity* ; commiserates that unhappy Condition that was but just now his own ; He pityeth the Innocent ; *confesseth with his Mouth the Lord Jesus ; believeth in his Heart.* And these were the only Things he had then at liberty ; and therefore he could do nothing more, to shew himself a Faithful Disciple of the Crucified Jesus. He owns him King, even when there was the least Appearance of his being such, and fixeth his Hope as firmly in Him as if *all Power in Heaven and Earth had been already given to him.* He shews an extraordinary Charity both in Opinion and Action, in Opinion in judging our Saviour to have done nothing amiss. — 41. His Charity in Action, in endeavouring to reclaim his Fellow, by reproving him for his Sin, — 40, 41. which he does (as St. Chrysostom observes) before he asks any Thing for himself. Now what is it that Sinners do like this, in all their Life, to give them Hope in their Death ? Can they, who from their Baptism have lived the rest of their Time to the Lusts of Men, and not to the Will of God, pretend to an immediate Acceptance of the

Terms of the Gospel? Can He, who lives in open Contradiction to the Divine Commands, intending only to conform to Them when he has no further Strength to break Them, can such a one say, that he strictly adheres to the Covenant of Grace? Or can He, who by his long continued Habits of sinning, has weakned all the Powers of his Soul, and strengthened nothing but his Lusts; can He (I say) in reason suppose, that he has not made himself *twofold more a Child of Hell than a Saint of Heaven*? Can he be said to be *strong in Faith*, who, notwithstanding our Saviour's Resurrection, the Consent of the best and wisest Men, the wonderful Conquest made by the Gospel over the Hearts and Lives of many, (shewing It to be *the Power of God unto Salvation*,) who, (I say) notwithstanding all this clear Evidence of Belief, can yet shew themselves the only obdurate Wretches, and disown their Saviour, now that *He is in his Kingdom*? And what reasonable Grounds of Hope can such Men have, who are so far from being *pure from their Sins*, that they daily *strengthen Themselves in their Wickedness*? And as to their Charity, Is it possible that they should have any true Love for their Brother, who have little or none for themselves? How can they commiserate another's unhappy Condition, when they do not so much as pity their own? Or, How can they pretend to any Love for God, whom they intend to affront all their Life-time, and at their Death to seek him, more out of Dread and Fear of him, than an ardent Affection towards him? How shall they delight in the Presence of him hereafter, whom they could not endure to think of here? or supposing They could hereafter relish any Pleasure in the sweet Society of Him, who now is *least in all their Thoughts*, yet what Foundation have they laid for such a Conversation in Heaven? Alas! their Graces are all to seek, and yet without these, it is impossible that they should

Rom. I. 16.

I Joh. 3. 3.

John 14,
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should ever be meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light. Heb. 12. 14.

But further, The Circumstances and Manner of this Penitent's Death were such as never any Sinners were before Him, nor ever can be again, unless our Blessed Lord should *once more become obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Cross*; and one of those, (who desires to make this Penitent's Case his own,) had never heard of the Name of Christ, till he chance to suffer with him, and then, by instantly believing in him, should once again procure an extraordinary share of Mercy from our merciful High Priest, who was pleased to give the first Proof of his being such to this Blessed Penitent, when he said to Him, *To day thou shalt be with me in Paradise*. Now such another lucky juncture as this can never occur again, (because Christ was not *to offer himself often*;) Heb. 9. 25. but supposing it could, yet this surpassing the standing Measures, and Methods of God's Grace, cannot be fairly drawn into Example, no more than Acts of Mercy and Oblivion from a Prince upon extraordinary Occasions, can encourage his rebellious Subjects always to expect the like Favour. The only Ground whereon they can found any reasonable Hopes of Pardon, is their immediate return to their Duty and Obedience; and this must be every Man's great Care and constant Endeavour in respect to God, in order to procure Pardon and Acceptance of him. Lev. 26. 41, Luke 15. His early Application to all the Duties of Religion, 12, &c. and his final Perseverance in Them, is the only hope of Mercy. Job 8. 5, 6. This is certainly most acceptable to God, most safe to himself, and will afford him the greatest Comfort when he shall stand in the greatest need of it, I mean, at a dying Hour: For a well-spent Life infallibly secures to us (as ye have seen) the Favour of God here, which is better than Life, and his Glory and Happiness hereafter, which is the Life and Perfection of our Souls. Rom. 2. 7. Prov. 12. 2. Psal. 23. 4. Prov. 10. 9. 1 Joh. 3. 3.

A short

A Short Prayer to be said upon our first Kneeling down at Church.

Pardon, O Lord, all my Sins, which make me unworthy to come into thy Presence, or to tread thy Courts: Quicken my Devotions to Thee. Open my Heart to attend unto Things that shall be spoken, and grant that we may all come together for the better, and not for the worse, for Jesus Christ his sake. *Amen.*

A Short Prayer to be said at Church immediately after Prayers, or Sermon.

BE pleased, O Lord, to accept this my Duty and Service, and to pardon the Imperfections of it. Grant it may so tend to my Spiritual Improvement, as may enable me to serve Thee better for the future; that going from Strength to Strength, I may at length appear before thee in Zion, even in thy heavenly Kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer for the Divine Grace to assist us in the performance of the various Duties mentioned in the foregoing Treatise.

MOST glorious Lord God, the great Creator of Heaven and Earth, and our most merciful Father in Christ Jesus. Thou art the Fountain of all Perfections, and the very Life and Happiness of all our Souls; we therefore thine unworthy Creatures *sinful Dust and Ashes*, present our Selves before Thee, to praise thee for the infinite Perfections of thy Nature, and to beg of Thee the necessary Supplies of thy Grace and Holy Spirit, that we may give thee the Honour due unto thy Name, and Worship thee suitably to thy Nature, with an holy and a spiritual Worship. Thou art of purer Eyes than to behold the least Iniquity; and therefore how shall such polluted Wretches as we are, dare to approach thy dreadful Majesty, who by our Sins and Follies have made our selves so unlike to thee, who art right-

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teous in all thy Ways and holy in all thy Works? How
 then shall we presume to come into thy holy
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 having nothing but Vanity and Blindness in our
 Minds, Perverseness in our Wills, both spiritual
 and carnal Iniquity in our Affections and Appe-
 tites, and what is worse, have defiled our Selves
 yet much more, by our many actual and habitua-
 l Sins against thee, so that we are altogether
 unworthy to approach thy Presence, or expect
 thy Favour, and yet have so great need of both,
 that without them, we are lost for ever: O
 therefore cast us not away from thy Presence, and
 take not thy Holy Spirit from us! but out of Pity
 to thy defective and diseased Creatures, receive
 us graciously, and heal our Souls, though we have sin-
 ned against Thee. Rescue us from the Power and
 Bondage of our Lusts by the greater Power of
 thy Grace. Renew and purifie our corrupted Na-
 tures. Create in us a clean Heart, O God, and renew a
 right Spirit within us. Teach us a perfect Denial
 of all our Sins, and establish us in a stedfast Obe-
 dience to all thy Laws. To which End, enlight-
 en our Minds to form clear and true Notions of
 Thee, and open our Hearts to attend upon all the
 Means that may help us to discharge our various
 Obligations to Thee. Inspire our Souls with thy
 heavenly Graces. Strengthen our Faith, confirm
 our Hope, encrease our Love, quicken our Fear,
 establish our Trust, inspire us with Patience,
 Constancy and Sincerity. Enflame our Devoti-
 ons, and enervate our Endeavours, in a faith-
 ful Discharge of our Duty to Thee. Give us thy
 Grace also to assist us in the Performance of our
 Duty to our Neighbour, that we may ever remem-
 ber, and constantly observe thy great and righ-
 teous Law, to love him as our selves, and to this
 End grant, That we may never defraud Him of
 his Right, but give him his due in all the Rela-
 tions towards us wherein he stands. Dispose us
 therefore, good Lord, chearfully to obey Them that
 have

have the Rule over us, whether in Church or State; and bless them in an happy Government of us; *that under them we may lead quiet and peaceable Lives in all Godliness and Honesty.* Bless all Sorts of Parents and Masters; grant that they may faithfully discharge the various Duties of their Stations, and their respective Inferiours may, in a grateful Return thereof, ever Love, Honour, and Obey them. Grant to all Men, we beseech thee, *the Spirit to think, and do all such Things as be rightful, ever adhering to that equitable Rule, the doing as they would be dealt by.* And grant us, O thou Fountain of Mercy and Love, a universal Charity towards all Men, even to our Enemies, that we may be ever ready both to forgive and also to provide, *that they which are in need and necessity have Right; in a suitable Relief of their various Wants;* and because our Prayers to Thee, *from whom every good and perfect Gift cometh,* are oft the best and only Helps we can afford them, therefore do thou, O Lord, abundantly for them, more than we can ask or think. Suit thy Mercies according to their various Necessities; sanctifie their Afflictions to them, and when thou seest it best for them, give them a happy Deliverance out of all their Troubles. And Lastly, O Lord, we come unto thee for a Blessing upon our Selves, who, as we are here Living Instances of thine Almighty Power and Goodness, so be pleased to make us the happy Instruments of thy Praise and Glory; to which Purpose enable us to subject all the Faculties of our Souls, and the Powers of our Bodies to thy blessed Will, which is the Law and Perfection of our reasonable Nature. Direct our Understandings to the Knowledge of those glorious Manifestations which thou hast been pleased to give us of thy self. Clear up our Apprehensions both of the Perfections of thy Nature, and the Excellency of those Perfections. Direct our Wills to the Choice and Imitation of such thy Perfections as are imitable

ble by us. Teach us the Wisdom to proportion our Affections of Things, according to the Nature and Value of them, that having a less Concern for this World, we may fear thee more, and love thee better : Give us a right Understanding of our Selves, of our own Insufficiency, and of our entire Dependance upon thee, that so we may not think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think. Teach us a chearful Submission to thine all-wise Dispensations, and in whatever State we are, therewith to be content. Endue us with a calm and gentle Temper of Soul, such as may invite thy Blessed Spirit to come, and take up his Abode with us, that through his Blessed Operations, we may bring forth the Fruits of the Spirit in Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, and Temperance. Subdue our bodily Appetites to the Laws of our Reason, and the End of their Creation, ever remembering that our Bodies are the Temples of the Holy Spirit ; and that he who defileth the Temple of God, him thou hast threatned to destroy. Out of an holy Fear and Dread of this, and all other thy reasonable Threats, grant that we may be ever careful to keep under our Bodies, and cleanse our Selves from all Filthiness both of Flesh and Spirit, that so we may (as we are in Duty bound) glorifie thee in our Body, and in our Spirit, which are Thine ; and we not only beg thy Grace to assist us in, but thy heavenly Wisdom, to shew us the reasonableness and necessity of our Performance of these Duties, that we may make haste and delay not to keep thy Commandments.

AND as we desire this Morning to enter into *For the* the World upon our lawful Occasions, *Morning.* with this holy Frame and Disposition of Soul, so grant, that we may never lose it, either through Surprize, or wilful Neglect, but guide us safely by thy Grace, through all the Dangers and Temptations of this, and all other Days of our Life ; that, escaping the Corruption that is in the World through Lust, we may live and die thy faithful and obedient Servants.

AND

*For the
Evening.*

AND now, O Lord, that we are going to repose our selves, *keep us from all Dangers and Adversities that may happen to our Bodies, and from all evil Thoughts and Dreams, which may assault and hurt our Souls,* that we may rise in the Morning with a fresh sense upon our Minds of thy Mercies to us, and a full Conviction of the absolute necessity of expressing our Thankfulness, not only with our Lips, but in the constant Obedience of our Lives, spending that Strength which thou hast given us, to thy Honour and Service; to whom we owe our utmost Praises, for all thy free and undeserved Mercies: Therefore

We not only pray unto thee, but desire to bless thee for all thy Benefits from time to time conferred upon us, for thy Creation of us out of Nothing, for thy Preservation of us ever since we had a Being, for all the Accommodations of this Life, and the plentiful Provision thou hast made for our Happiness in the other; for all that thy Son our dear Redeemer, has done and suffer'd for us, for his wonderful Incarnation and Birth, for his exemplary Life, his meritorious Death and Passion, for his glorious Resurrection and Ascension, and for his sending the Holy Ghost to comfort us; for all thy Saints and Servants departed this Life in thy true Faith and Fear, beseeching thee to give us Grace so to follow their good Examples, that with them we may be Partakers of thy heavenly Kingdom: These Prayers and Praises, with whatever else thou in thine infinite Wisdom, seest most necessary and expedient for us, we humbly offer up in the Name and for the Sake of thy Son, our blessed Saviour and Redeemer, who has commanded us, when we pray, to say, *Our Father which art in, &c.*

This Prayer may be used by one Person, only changing the Words *We, Us, and Our,* into *I, Me, and My,* and saying instead of *Creatures Creature, &c.*

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